



**Theatre Arts and Performance Studies**

**Doctoral Program**

**HANDBOOK**

**UPDATED: March 5, 2024**

**This document supersedes previous TAPS Doctoral Student Handbooks.**

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**This handbook is addressed to current and prospective PhD students, to be used as a planning guide and reference resource throughout a student's academic career.** Pertinent University web resources should be regarded as the primary references for degree requirements and options. It is intended to complement the Graduate School Handbook and students should consult the Graduate School Handbook on University-wide policies on matters such as funding, leaves of absence, etc.

## 1. Program Overview and General Information

### *Overview*

The PhD Program in Theatre and Performance Studies at Brown University offers a rigorous environment for pursuing doctoral research. Taking a broad-spectrum approach to the histories, theories, and methods of theatre and performance studies from a global perspective, the program trains doctoral students to use performance as an analytical lens to explore the labor of mimesis in the social.

The PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies, launched in 2002, builds on the strength of the long-standing Brown Master's Program that historically provided the field of theatre with many excellent scholars. The PhD program is an ideal degree for students interested in the intersections between artistry and scholarship. The program provides students with a firm grasp of the fields of theatre studies and performance studies, an understanding of the historical underpinnings of theatre and performance practices globally, and an ability to employ performance theory and criticism in the service of scholarship across a range of objects of study. The number of doctoral candidates in Theatre and Performance Studies on the Brown campus will range between ten and sixteen at any given time.

Brown's environment is alive with the intersections of performance practice and theory: PhD students benefit from formal and informal cross-currents with Brown's acclaimed MFA Playwriting Program, the Brown/Trinity MFA Programs in Acting and Directing (offered in consortium with the Tony Award winning Trinity Repertory Company), the Brown Arts Institute, and the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). Brown's libraries provide exceptional special collections for performance-related research, including the Harris Collection of American Drama and Poetry, the Smith Collection of Conjuring, Magicana, and Popular Entertainment, and the Albert-Bernard Shaw Collection. Our students take full advantage of Brown's unique interdisciplinary opportunities—including the Open Graduate Education Program, which enables doctoral students to apply to pursue a Master's degree in a secondary field of study at Brown—and gain teaching experience through a variety of opportunities in and beyond the department.

### *Program Mission and Objectives*

The mission of the PhD program is to support the training of scholars pursuing advanced academic research in theatre and performance studies at the highest levels of innovation, creativity, and excellence. Our program seeks to help our students develop into scholars who can think critically and creatively and who can become new leaders in the field. We are an intentionally small program which allows for intensive advising and mentorship. Our graduate faculty members work closely with the Graduate School to provide our students with extensive opportunities for learning, research, and professional development.

### *Curriculum*

Graduate students in Theatre and Performance Studies at Brown University benefit from the flexibility of Brown's unique graduate environment. As a small program we encourage and facilitate cross-departmental collaboration across the arts, humanities and social sciences (i.e. Africana Studies

Department and Rites and Reason Theatre, Modern Culture and Media, History of Art and Architecture, American Studies, Slavic Studies, Comparative Literature). Indeed, and in some

distinction from other programs, students are encouraged to take advantage of courses across the university, meaning that the diversity of opportunities at Brown can be folded into a program of study. Our doctoral students and faculty frequently work with other units on campus such as the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, The Cogut Institute for the Humanities, the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women and the Brown Arts Institute. Unique to Brown, the Open Graduate Education Program offers doctoral students the opportunity to pursue a master's degree (MA) in a separate field in addition to the PhD by being awarded an extra year of funding. We have had students earn additional Masters degrees in Anthropology, History, and Philosophy through this competitive program, and PhD students from other departments have joined us to receive a masters in Theatre and Performance Studies as well. The Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies produces a dynamic theatre, dance, and performance season at Brown and provide a slate of courses with significant strength in world theatre histories, performance theory, cultural studies, and contemporary performance practices and methods which allow students to determine appropriate curriculum for their particular projects.

### *Advising*

The PhD Program in TAPS has a flexible curriculum, often tailored to the needs of each individual student's research interests, as articulated in conversations with academic advisors (including but not limited to the DGS, academic advisors or dissertation advisors).

It is the expectation in TAPS that students will meet with their advisors at least once every semester, and likely more often in their first year, during the comprehensive exam process, and when entering the academic job market. Students are responsible for initiating these meetings and maintaining regular contact with their advisors to apprise them of their progress toward the fulfillment of degree requirements, including the dissertation. When the meetings entail requests for feedback on the students' writing or other professional materials, please make sure to allow adequate time for advisors to receive and review those materials before the meeting.

We encourage students to meet and discuss their work with any department faculty members as their research and pedagogical interests develop. Students are welcome to ask for meetings with any members of our faculty. Typically, PhD students are expected to have obtained the agreement of a faculty member to serve as their primary advisor by the spring of year 2.

We also recognize that as a student's research interests develop over the course of their time at Brown, advising relationships may need to change. Students can initiate conversations about changing their advisor and/or committee members by discussing this with their current advisor, or with the Director of Graduate Studies, or with the Department Chair, as appropriate.

### *Library Resources*

The libraries at Brown provide exceptional resources including several special collections, among them the Harris Collection of American Drama and Poetry; the Smith Collection of Conjuring, Magicana, and Popular Entertainment Forms; the Albert-Bernard Shaw Collection; and the John Carter Brown Library, which is renowned for its historical sources pertaining to the Americas, both North and South, before ca. 1825. TAPS works with our own specialist librarian Laura Stokes and

with Hay librarian Heather Cole. The library also provides support for identifying and applying for funding (such as data management plans for grants).

### ***Alumni Job Placement***

The program is committed to helping to place students in academic positions, should they so desire, upon completion of the doctorate. Graduates of our PhD program have achieved a stellar placement rate into academic positions. Many have gone on to become leaders in the field. Students in our program have received significant awards in the field and served as graduate leaders in national and international conference organizations. A [recent national study](#) of Theatre and Performance Studies graduate programs showed that Brown was the top program in terms of placement, with 100% of our graduates holding full time academic positions. Graduates of our program have obtained academic employment at top institutions including Colgate University, Connecticut College, Florida State University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, New York University, Pittsburgh University, Princeton University, Queen Mary University of London, Simon Fraser University, UCLA, University of Cincinnati, University of Rhode Island, Washington University in St. Louis, and Yale University, among other institutions.

## 2. Admissions

**Applications for AY 2023-2024 are due January 4, 2023** and must be submitted via the Graduate School's Online Application portal [here](#). You can find detailed instructions about the application process and components [here](#). The Graduate School's application FAQ can be found [here](#).

**Applicants will be asked to submit the following materials as part of the online application:**

1. A statement of purpose (also called a personal statement, generally 2-3 pages) that should address your current academic research interests, why you wish to pursue a PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies, and how you see your work benefiting from the broader context of the department and Brown as a whole. The most successful personal statements make a compelling case for why your research would best be served by our program given the current composition of our faculty and the resources that are available at Brown.
2. An academic writing sample (10- 25 pages). This is an especially important element of the application, so be sure to submit an example of your strongest scholarly writing to date.
3. Three letters of recommendation.
4. Transcripts from all academic institutions where you have previously studied (graduate and undergraduate).

International applicants whose native language is not English must also submit an official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score.

The GRE is no longer required in order to apply for the PhD Program in Theatre and Performance Studies at Brown.

### **Frequently Asked Questions about Admission:**

#### **How many students do you accept, and what is the average time to degree?**

As an intentionally small program with an emphasis on intensive mentorship and advising, we accept a cohort of approximately 2 to 3 students per year. Most of our PhD students complete the degree within 5 to 7 years.

#### **Do you accept students who are interested in my specific area(s) of academic interest?**

We welcome applicants who are interested in all aspects of theatre and performance studies research. The best way to learn about the range of research topics and methods that are being pursued in our program is by looking through the profiles of our [current faculty](#) and [PhD students](#).

#### **I already have an MA or MFA degree: can I still apply to the PhD program?**

Yes. We accept students who have obtained Bachelor's degrees as well as students who have previously completed an MA or MFA. Depending on the field of study, students may receive credit toward the PhD degree for previous graduate coursework completed at other institutions. Up to 7 courses may be accepted toward the degree from the MA or MFA upon review of the faculty. Please

note the application is the same and the funding commitment is the same for those who enter with a BA and those who enter with an MA or MFA.

Further inquiries regarding the Doctoral Program should be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies in Theatre Arts and Performance Studies, Box 1897, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912.  
Email: [taps@brown.edu](mailto:taps@brown.edu)

For questions about the application process (including TOEFL submission, LORs, transcripts, and other technical questions), please contact the Graduate School directly at [Admission\\_Graduate@brown.edu](mailto:Admission_Graduate@brown.edu).

Applications to the PhD and MFA programs are submitted to, and managed through, the Graduate School. Please do not email the Department with technical questions or requests to troubleshoot your online application submission.

### 3. Financial Support

Brown guarantees 6 years of funding for all admitted PhD students, which includes full tuition remission, a generous living stipend, and health insurance. This financial support applies to both domestic and international students admitted to our doctoral program. Funding is provided through a combination of fellowships (two years) and teaching/research assistantships (three+ years).

First year funding is awarded as a Fellowship. A second year of fellowship is used in year four or five depending on the needs of the student in consultation with your advisor. The other years are funded by on-campus teaching, proctorships, or other approved assistantships, unless the student obtains external or internal fellowships that provide additional support in lieu of the standard funding package offered by the Department upon admission. Further details about financial support is available through Brown's Graduate School [website](#).

Our students have also been very successful in securing funding for their studies, as needed, beyond the sixth year through external and internal fellowships and grants. If a student is in good standing and still needs time to complete the dissertation after five years, a student may apply for sixth year funding through the DCP program:

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/dissertation-completion-proposal>). Students in the seventh year and beyond may apply for a DEP to offset tuition and maintain benefits:

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/dissertation-completion-proposal>).

Finally, all financial support provided by Brown is contingent upon students maintaining “good” or “satisfactory” standing in the program. Students receive a written evaluation letter at the end of each semester they are in the program alerting them to their standing. “Good” standing is standard; “Satisfactory” standing is granted when there is concern about the student’s capacity to complete the program requirements in the appropriate time-frame; and “warning” indicates that the student is at risk of losing eligibility for continued enrollment and financial support. Reasons for receiving “Satisfactory” or “Warning” status can vary from having multiple incompletes in coursework to failing to pass or complete subsequent degree requirements, e.g. Qualifying Assessment, Comps Exams, Dissertation Proposal, or the Dissertation.



## 4. Degree Requirements

### *Coursework*

*(Paragraphs 2-6 under this section updated March 5, 2024 and apply to PhD students entering the program AY 2024-2025 and later.)*

The most up to date version of Brown's current, future, and past course listings are available at Courses@Brown: <https://cab.brown.edu/>

Fourteen (14) total course credits must be completed by the end of Year 3, including one credit of Graduate Colloquium taken in Year 1 (Graduate Colloquium is mandatory S/NC and is taken for .5 credits per semester, both semesters), one half-credit course in pedagogy, and one half-credit course in professionalization and research methods.

All TAPS PhD students are required to take TAPS 2100 Seminar in Performance Studies and Theatrical Theory (offered every other fall) once. TAPS PhD students are also expected to take the TAPS Graduate Seminar (topic varies; typically listed in the course catalog as TAPS 2300) each semester that they are in coursework. The remaining courses may be chosen from course offerings throughout the university.

Up to two of these credits may be taken as independent studies with individual faculty members at Brown. Please note that you must still enroll and register for every Independent Study you take (listed in Brown's online course catalog as TAPS 2980: Graduate Level Independent Reading and Research, or its equivalent if the faculty member you are working with is in a different department).

Students who do not yet have a Masters in the field and expect to acquire an MA in the process of doctoral candidacy at Brown will complete at least 14 courses to receive the PhD. To receive an MA, students should have completed 10 courses by the end of year 2, including two semesters of the graduate colloquium taken the first year in the program.

Students who already have an MA or MFA degree from another institution will work with the Director of Graduate Studies to determine how many of their credits will transfer toward Brown's PhD degree. The maximum number of courses accepted from other institutions will be six. This means that students with prior degrees must take at least eight course credits at Brown, including the one Graduate Colloquium credit in their first year.

In order to receive credit for a previously taken graduate-level course you completed at another institution, you must submit a syllabus from the class to the DGS who will circulate it to the TAPS Graduate faculty for approval.

Brown's graduate faculty offers a full menu of specialty courses currently in the areas of Theatre Drama and Performance of the Americas; European Theatre and Performance Traditions; Non-Western Theatre and Performance; Twentieth-Century Western Theatre and Performance; Performance Theory; Ethnography and Performance; Feminist, Race-Critical, Queer Theory and Performance; Abstraction and Resistance; Historiography, Political Theatre and Performance, Neoliberalism and Performance; Studies in Liveness and New Materialism; Archive Culture; Labor and Theatricality; Subjects and Objects: Evidence as Metaphor and Constraint; and Performance Art and Everyday Life. Our Department also offers courses in Dance Studies and practical courses in theatre and design that some of our graduate

students have found to be quite useful. These courses offer different methodologies and discourses as well as variety in subject matter. In addition, our diverse field faculty offer courses in Playwriting, Music, Africana Studies, English, Literary Arts, Comparative Literature, Classics, Anthropology, Modern Culture and Media, etc. There are many other relevant courses involving film studies, digital media studies, literary theory and genre studies, religion and ritualistic performance, art history and representation, cultural studies and political discourse, and gender and identity, many of which are cross-listed and some team-taught through two departments, indicating the openness to academic border-crossing and resource-sharing that is the norm at Brown. Students may choose to audit an elective course, or, depending on the professor, may be allowed to attend without registering by vagabonding. Brown's "shopping period" (the period during which you can add a course without incurring a fee) allows students to sit in on several different courses before deciding upon a final course schedule for the semester.

Students who enter the PhD program without significant previous coursework in theatre and performance studies often choose to take undergraduate courses for graduate credit in consultation with the advisor or DGS. In general, undergraduate (1000-level) courses may be taken for graduate credit upon agreement with the instructor and DGS approval. When graduate students take 1000-level courses for credit, they are usually expected to complete additional work, as determined by the instructor, that bring the course up to graduate level work. These courses count towards the 14-course requirement for the PhD.

### ***Graduate Colloquium***

The Graduate Colloquium consists of a series of events that take place each semester where we form our public intellectual community. The Graduate Colloquium entails a public lecture series featuring leading scholars in the field, as well as workshops given by faculty devoted to particular topics of relevance such as academic publishing, professional conferences, and the academic job market. Guest speakers are invited from a list that is drawn up by the graduate faculty and the graduate students to reflect students' research interests. Past guests have included Robin Bernstein, Ann Pellegrini, Jordy Rosenberg, Shonni Enelow, Tiffany Lethobo King, Mel Chen, Soyica Diggs Colbert, Juana Maria Rodriguez, Ashon Crawley, Amber Musser, and Jisha Menon. Brown faculty from the Department and beyond also present their work in the colloquium series. Each year's schedule is posted to the department's website ([brown.edu/taps](http://brown.edu/taps)).

First year students will receive academic credit for the colloquium during their first two semesters in the program. Thus, all first-year doctoral students must register for TAPS 2980 Graduate Level Independent Reading and Research with the DGS as instructor in both the Fall and Spring semester of the first year.

Advanced graduate students (year 2 and beyond) do not register for credit but are expected to attend all events in the colloquium series as long as they are in residence.

### ***Qualifying Assessment (Year 2)***

A Qualifying Assessment takes place at the completion of every student's third semester, regardless of whether a student entered with a Master's Degree or without. The Qualifying Assessment is an exam that consists of one seminar paper of your choice written for a class you've taken at Brown, preferably in TAPS, as well as your Brown Graduate School transcript to date. Both the paper and your transcript are due to be submitted to the DGS by Nov. 15 of your third semester (Fall of Year 2). The DGS circulates

these papers and transcripts to the TAPS Graduate Faculty for approval. At the end of the fourth semester, typically in May, second-year students give a conference-length (approx. 15 minute) oral presentation drawn from the Qualifying Paper to the graduate community. Second-year students whose Qualifying Papers are approved by the faculty will then qualify to receive a Masters degree from TAPS (en route to the PhD), which will be conferred in May of the second year of PhD studies. In the rare circumstance that a student's assessment exam is not approved, that student will be awarded an MA degree upon the completion of ten courses but will not be permitted to progress toward doctoral candidacy at Brown.

### ***Choosing a Primary Advisor (a.k.a. "Chair") and Forming a Committee***

By the end of the second year, the student selects a primary academic advisor also known as the committee chair. Soon after the student will assemble a comprehensive exam committee (3 people including the chair) to oversee the process through the comprehensive exams to select an advisor, a student asks a member of the TAPS graduate faculty to serve in this function. The selection of the chair is largely the responsibility of the student, though often the student discusses potential choices with the Director of Graduate Studies who serves as the student's default advisor until a formal selection is made. Students should select carefully based on concordance of scholarly experience and interest; note that a faculty member is not required to accept a student's request. It is best to have taken at least one class with a professor before asking them to chair, though this is not always possible. The advisor is also the comprehensive committee chair who leads the student through the process of exams. Usually, this advisor becomes the dissertation advisor once the student passes the exams and begins working on a dissertation. The student selects the broader committee together with the chair, with an eye toward the requirements of the comprehensive exams and the student's (and faculty's) areas of expertise. A committee is composed of three to five faculty, including the chair. Generally, at least two members of the committee are members of the TAPS graduate faculty or affiliated field faculty, but other committee members may be chosen from either inside or outside the University. Following the comprehensive exams, the committee may be amended or altered (including the chair) to accommodate the dissertation topic.

### ***Comprehensive Exams***

In order to qualify for doctoral candidacy, the Dissertation Fellowship, and to be eligible for Departmental approval to take any additional Fellowships, including the open graduate program, a student will take Comprehensive Exams. Generally, the exams are taken three to six months after the completion of course work. Ideally, conversation about the exams should begin with the committee chair/advisor before the last semester of coursework. The exams consist of three specialized essay exams based on reading lists prepared by the student and augmented and approved by the student's committee to reflect areas of scholarly interest. The preparation of these lists requires regular on campus meetings with committee faculty throughout the process. It is advisable that discussions about the comprehensive exams begin with the student's chair well in advance of the projected exam date because of the time it takes to form the appropriate committee for the specialized areas of study, then to adequately develop appropriate bibliographic lists representative of the areas of study, to have the lists approved, and to study those lists in preparation for the exams. These lists should be approved by the committee at least three months in advance of the oral exam. These reading lists will be prefaced by a descriptive statement on the area of the study and the focus of inquiry, and may be accompanied by a set of questions that the student will prepare to address.

When the student is ready to take the exam, each committee member sends a question, derived from the student's list, to the chair of the student's committee. The chair collates the questions and, at the starting day of the two-week writing period, send the questions to the candidate. After receiving the questions, the student has two weeks to write 3 essays answering the 3 questions received from the committee chair. Each essay should be 15-20 pages in length (double-spaced, 12pt font, appropriate margins). When passing in the exam, the student should include the initial question on a front matter sheet. The exam can be passed in electronically. All members should receive and are expected to read all essays.

A comprehensive exam defense is an oral defense of your exams. The exam generally runs between 1.5-2 hours. A common defense style is as follows: Everyone gathers. The student is asked to step outside. The committee discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the essays while the candidate is not in the room (this often takes only a short period of time). The student then reenters and presents their own assessment of the exams for about ten minutes. Each student should discuss the opening presentation in advance with his or her advisor. After this, each of the three essays is addressed. The committee poses questions to the student, who answers. Sometimes, all talk together about the issues raised. At the end of the defense, the student will leave the room and the committee will deliberate for a short period of time on the status of the candidate. If a candidate passes, a brief discussion may ensue regarding the candidate's plan for a dissertation.

The Comprehensive exam consists of a written essay exam with an oral defense and a secondary portion to demonstrate knowledge of performance history. This second portion can be fulfilled in two ways: (*Options A & B were updated March 5, 2024 and apply to PhD students entering the program AY 2024-2025. PhD students entering the program earlier should speak to their advisor if interested in substituting one of these options in their plan.*)

Option A: The general theatre history exam, drawn from the undergraduate theatre history course sequence (TAPS 1230, 1240, and 1250). This exam is a short identification test consisting of fifty identification prompts. To pass, a student needs to identify 75% of the terms correctly. Exams are tailored to each student by their committee, with terms chosen from a comprehensive list maintained by the department. This exam can be taken at any time, but must be completed before or shortly (within approx. three months) after the oral defense of your comprehensive exams.

Option B: In lieu of the general history written identification exam, students can choose instead to create an original syllabus for an undergraduate-level theatre and performance history or theory class of their own design, which engages core knowledge of the field. Your original syllabus will be due to your advisor and two other committee members three months after the comprehensive exams.

### ***Language Requirement***

The Doctoral Program requires that PhD candidates satisfy the requirement for reading comprehension in two foreign languages or satisfy a requirement for research proficiency in one foreign language. The language requirement must be fulfilled before students can advance to candidacy, also known as ABD ("all but dissertation") status.

The requirement for reading comprehension in two languages can be satisfied in one of the following ways for each language:

1. The student can prove, through a college transcript, an appropriate level of study of a foreign language. The transcript should show that the student has passed a class at the equivalent level to Brown's advanced-intermediate foreign language courses.
2. The student can take and pass a "Language for Reading" class at Brown or elsewhere, such as "Reading for German," or "Reading for French." These classes are generally offered during the summer. Official transcript certifying that the student has passed the class must be submitted to the DGS. Language for Reading classes will not count toward the required course credits for the PhD.
3. The student can take a language placement exam through the Center for Language Studies and obtain a score sufficient to place into an advanced-level language class, beyond the intermediate level. The placement exam used by the lab tests reading, vocabulary, and grammar (rather than listening/speaking). Exams vary by language and ability level. Students should consult with the DGS and the administrators of the Center for Language Studies directly for more information about this option. Please consult the Center for Language Studies website for the most up-to-date information: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/language-studies/languages/language-placement>

The requirement for research proficiency in one language can be satisfied in one of the following ways:

1. The student may be a native speaker in a language other than English.
2. The student may submit a seminar-length paper (at least 10 pages) in English using multiple primary and secondary sources in the foreign language (cited in the text in the foreign language and translated by the student into English as well).
4. The student may take a language placement exam through the Center for Language Studies and obtain a score sufficient to place into 100-level or higher class conducted in the language (typically a literature or culture course). Exams vary by language and ability level. Students should consult with the DGS and the administrators of the Center for Language Studies directly for more information about this option. Please consult the Center for Language Studies website for the most up-to-date information: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/language-studies/languages/language-placement>
3. The student may take and pass a course at the 100 level or higher, conducted in a language other than English. This course may count toward the required course credits for the PhD.

Further information about language proficiency opportunities for graduate students is available through the Brown University Center for Language Studies:

<https://languagesatbrown.wixsite.com/brownphdlanguage>

Note that American Sign Language (ASL) is acceptable to fulfill the language requirement; however, computer-based coding languages (e.g. Python) are not.

### ***Dissertation Proposal***

Following the successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam, each student will write a dissertation proposal. While there is no set format or standard length for the proposal, the proposal generally includes: A summary/abstract/description of the dissertation including the project's contribution to the field, a concise review of literature, a description of methodology, a chapter breakdown/brief description of organization and a bibliography of relevant materials. Usually this will be 10-15 pages double spaced. Although deadlines vary in relation to student needs and committee requirements, they should be

submitted within 4 months of the comprehensive exams. Dissertation Proposals are submitted to and approved by the dissertation committee chair.

### ***Dissertation***

In addition to passing comprehensive exams and submitting a proposal, a scholarly dissertation is required. The dissertation, formatted in either Chicago or MLA style, will be subject to an oral defense.

The Graduate School's guidelines for dissertations can be found here:

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/dissertation-guidelines>. For final touches, see the library link on thesis binding here: [library.brown.edu/forgs/thesisbinding\\_gs.php](http://library.brown.edu/forgs/thesisbinding_gs.php).

### ***Dissertation Defense***

A dissertation defense is generally two hours long. A common defense style is as follows. Everyone gathers. The student is asked to step outside. The committee discusses format and major issues while the candidate is not in the room (this often takes only a short period of time). The student then reenters and presents for about ten minutes. Some students discuss the process of writing; some offer a self-evaluation of the argument or a self-assessment of the dissertation's strengths and weaknesses; some address what questions remain. Each student should discuss the opening presentation in advance with his or her advisor. After this, the committee poses questions to the student, who answers. At the end of the defense, the student will leave the room and the committee will deliberate; the student will then be invited back into the room and informed of the result.

### **Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Degree Completion:**

*What is the role of the committee at the dissertation stage?*

A committee is composed of faculty members who will ultimately determine whether or not a dissertation can be passed. As you research and write, you and your advisor should determine the right time to present work in the form of chapters to your committee members for their feedback. Usually, primary advisors (dissertation chairs) read your work chapter by chapter and meet with students regularly. It is expected that students will meet regularly with other committee members as per their agreements with said faculty members and decide how often they will review your dissertation writing in addition to review by your advisor. Please allow adequate time for review by faculty members. It is highly recommended that students leave four to six weeks for review of an entire dissertation before the defense. However, real world deadlines (job awards or post-doctoral fellowships) often cramp the time allotment. Ideally, regular communication with the committee will ensure proper planning. When in doubt, ask!

*How long is a dissertation?*

Dissertation length varies. Generally, dissertations are between 200 and 300 double-spaced pages in length but there is no required word count or length.

*At what point in the dissertation writing process can or should a student begin applying for jobs?*

Applying for jobs can be exceedingly time consuming. In general, it is not advisable to begin a job search until 2/3 of the dissertation is completed and an advisor has approved your progress toward completion. Remember that your committee will be contacted by potential employers to report on your dissertation progress, so you should confer with your advisor about the timing of job applications.

## 5. Milestones for Doctoral Study in Theatre and Performance Studies

This list enumerates the milestones intended as possible, but not rigid, markers for timely progress in the Doctoral Program in Theatre and Performance Studies at Brown University. Each student's timeline may differ, and will be determined in consultation with a committee chair and the director of graduate studies in theatre and performance studies. These lists are approximate goals and guidelines.

### For students entering with a BA only:

Year 1: Coursework, including required grad seminars and grad colloquia. Recommended six courses over the year. Participation in "Key Text" sessions.

Year 2: Coursework, including required grad seminar and grad colloquia. Qualifying Assessment by November 15 of the third semester. Selection of committee chair/advisor after assessment at the start of second semester. Second semester, begin to design comprehensive exam areas with committee chair. A committee should preferably be in place by the end of the second year. Participation in grad colloquia?

Year 3: Solidification of comprehensive exam lists. Coursework in the Fall, including grad seminar. Comps should be completed by the Spring of the third year. Participation in grad colloquia.

Year Four: Participation in grad colloquia. Completion of Language Requirement and writing of Dissertation Proposal. Dissertation research fully underway in the Spring semester.

Year Five: Dissertation writing/Finish Dissertation. Participation in grad colloquia.

Year Six (If necessary and is funded by the university): Finish dissertation.

### For students entering with accepted Masters equivalency:

Year 1: Coursework, including required grad seminar and grad colloquia. Recommended six courses over the year. Participation in "Key Text" sessions.

Year 2: Coursework, including required grad seminar and grad colloquia. Qualifying Assessment by November 15. Selection of committee chair after assessment at the start of second semester (if not before). Serious work begun on comprehensive exam areas. Selection of full committee and preliminary comprehensive exam lists by end of Spring semester.

Year 3: Comps in the Fall. If the comps are to be taken in the Spring, courses should be taken in the Fall. Participation in grad colloquia. Language requirement should be completed by this year if possible.

Year Four: Dissertation proposal accepted and Dissertation underway. Participation in grad colloquia.

Year Five: Dissertation writing. Participation in grad colloquia.

## 6. Teaching, Teaching Assistantships, and Proctorships

Teaching and pedagogical development is an important part of your graduate career in TAPS. Over the course of your time in the program, during the semesters when you are not on Fellowship, you will be assigned proctorship and/or teaching assignments to help you develop your pedagogical and professional skills. These assignments have different levels of responsibility, but generally, you will progress to increased responsibility in the classroom, moving through the different categorizations of teaching positions (Proctor, TA1, TA2, and Teaching Fellow) as appropriate. Assignments are made by the DGS and graduate faculty based on a combination of student interest, teaching experience, and departmental needs. TAs and proctorships are typically decided and announced at the end of the Spring semester for the following academic year.

Graduate Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows, Instructors and Proctors at Brown are employees of the University and are collectively represented as such by Brown's Graduate Student Union, SUGSE. Hence, all policies and procedures related to teaching assistantship, fellowship, and proctorship appointments in the TAPS Department are subject to the terms of the contract agreement negotiated between the University and the union. The current union agreement, including information related to compensation, work duties, and grievance procedures, is available via the following link:

[https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/human-resources/sites/human-resources/files/Brown%20SUGSE%20Final%20Agreement\\_061520.pdf](https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/human-resources/sites/human-resources/files/Brown%20SUGSE%20Final%20Agreement_061520.pdf)

Please note that, according to the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, "No Graduate Student Employee shall be compelled or pressured to work more than an average of twenty (20) hours per week as part of their assigned position, except in the case of an RA whose work is also their thesis work, in which case the hour cap does not apply."

### Teaching Assistant (TA)

**TA's** (sometimes also referred to as TA1s) are teaching assistants for undergraduate courses that do not have separate discussion sections or recitations. Many undergraduate courses in TAPS have this structure. The TA1 position is defined as follows in Brown's current Collective Bargaining Agreement contract for graduate students:

A Teaching Assistant (TA) assists a faculty member both inside and outside the classroom on activities related to the teaching of a particular course. The nature of the tasks may vary depending on the teaching needs of the individual department. TAs are supervised by a faculty member and do not bear primary responsibility for the design or implementation of a course. Appointments are made in the sole discretion of the Graduate School on the basis of departmental recommendations. The duties of a TA vary across courses and departments and examples of standard duties may include some classroom teaching, the presentation of occasional lectures, leading discussion sections, preparing and supervising labs, conducting tutorials, holding office hours, grading papers, problem sets, quizzes, and examinations, and other programmatic duties for a course.

In TAPS, Duties for TA1 assignments may vary according to the course and the faculty instructor, but commonly include the following tasks:

- 1) Preparing library reserves or instructional materials under the supervision of the instructor within a reasonable timeline.



- 2) Grading exams, papers, response papers, discussion posts and projects.
- 3) Helping to construct Canvas sites and materials uploaded to them.
- 4) Holding office hours to help students in the course (usually required)
- 5) Performing exam review sessions for students in the course.
- 6) Giving 1 or 2 presentations over the course of the semester in the class as determined by the instructor.
- 7) Attending all classes and posting brief notes for lectures for students who were absent.
- 8) Providing support, within limits, for students who seek guidance through the department/institution for necessary learning and campus life resources.

Each TA I is entitled to receive a written evaluation of their performance as a TA with suggestions for development for each course in which they work. This evaluation may stand alone or be incorporated into the semester progress evaluations. It is expected that faculty will meet with their TAS regularly to discuss pedagogical plans and goals and that their expectations for grading and turnaround on duties and assignments will be respectful of graduate student workloads and deadlines.

It is not expected that students will be asked to do TA duties earlier than one week before classes start.

### **Teaching Assistant II (TA II)**

The **TA II** position is defined as follows in Brown's current Collective Bargaining Agreement contract for graduate students:

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

In TAPS, **TA IIs** are assignments in which students run a separate section of a course as a Teaching Assistant. In addition to the duties listed above for TA I, students in this category may also be asked to:

- 1) Lead discussion sections, and/or recitations with students without the professor present.
- 2) Give lectures/presentations without the instructor present
- 3) Take an increased role in grading and/or consulting with students about presentations and papers for the course.
- 4) Providing support, within limits, for students who seek guidance through the department/institution for necessary learning and campus life resources.

Each TA II is entitled to receive a written evaluation of their performance as a TA with suggestions for development for each course in which they work. This evaluation may stand alone or be incorporated into the semester progress evaluations. It is expected that faculty will meet with their TAs regularly to discuss pedagogical plans and goals and that their expectations for grading and turnaround on duties and assignments will be respectful of graduate student workloads and deadlines.

It is not expected that students will be asked to do TA duties earlier than one week before classes start, however, they may be asked to review materials in advance of the start date. It is not expected that students who teach as TA-II's will develop their own syllabi, although they are welcome to discuss suggestions with the primary instructors of the course.

## Teaching Fellows (TF)

Teaching Fellows in TAPS will be responsible for their own course. The TF position is defined as follows in Brown's current Collective Bargaining Agreement contract for graduate students:

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

They will serve as the primary instructor, perform all grading and assessment of students and are responsible for reporting grades in Banner Web, Brown's official course registration and grading portal, which can be accessed at <https://selfservice.brown.edu>.

The development of the course syllabus for Teaching Fellows should occur in advance of the semester in consultation with advisors and other department faculty. Courses taught by Teaching Fellows must be approved by the College Curriculum Council (CCC) in advance of the semester in which they are taught; a calendar of approvals will be laid out accordingly.

Each Teaching Fellow is entitled to receive a written evaluation of their performance as with suggestions for development for each course they taught. Because these are stand-alone courses, it is expected that students will work with their advisor, the DGS or another instructor of choice to schedule a review of their teaching. The resulting evaluation may stand alone or be incorporated into the semester's progress evaluations. Formal and informal opportunities for syllabus development will be made available to teaching fellows.

## Proctorships

Proctorships are employment opportunities for students outside of formal teaching. These opportunities are designed to prepare students for professional duties in the academy outside of the formal classroom and within arts departments and institutions that PHD students in theatre and performance studies could be employed in. These proctorships could include work on theatre and dance artistic production, editorial duties, diversity and inclusion development, and artistic programming. These assignments are subject to student aptitude, departmental needs and the development of the programs and curricula of TAPS and the BAI. Although duties vary widely, the skills built and employed by the proctors will be applicable to students' professional development.

Proctors are entitled to receive a written evaluation from their supervisor of their performance with suggestions for growth. This evaluation may stand alone or be incorporated into the semester progress evaluations. It is expected that proctorship supervisors will meet with their proctors regularly and that turnaround on duties and assignments will be respectful of graduate student workloads and deadlines. It is not expected that students will be asked to do proctorship duties earlier than one week before classes start.

**Further Notes and Resources for TAs, Teaching Fellows, and Proctors**

The graduate students have a shared TA office hours calendar to organize the collective use of the office space in Lyman. This calendar is typically shared at the beginning of the semester.

Graduate students can seek out support for their teaching as well as in building their teaching portfolio in the department and across the university. The Sheridan Center can provide resources such as scheduling a teaching observation, providing TA orientation workshops to teaching at Brown, and other professionalization opportunities. Further teaching resources for graduate students that may be helpful to consult can be found here: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/teaching-0>

## 7. Frequently Asked Questions about the PhD Program (and TAPS in General)

### Who provides administrative support for the doctoral program?

#### Staff:

The three members of the TAPS administrative staff you should get to know immediately are:

**Chris Redihan**, Department Manager. [chris\\_redihan@brown.edu](mailto:chris_redihan@brown.edu), 401-863-6718

**Jo Bynum**, Student Affairs Manager. [nita\\_bynum@brown.edu](mailto:nita_bynum@brown.edu), 401-863-3283

**Alex Nurkin**, Academic Events/Facilities Manager. [alex\\_nurkin@brown.edu](mailto:alex_nurkin@brown.edu), 401-863-6951

Chris and Jo are located in Lyman 106, the main hub of the Department. They can answer most of your practical questions about payroll, registration, reimbursements, IDs, photocopying, mail, keys, etc. Alex's office is 008 downstairs.

#### Director of Graduate Studies:

In addition to being your first academic advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) oversees many internal academic affairs of the departmental graduate program. The DGS can address questions regarding the timeline for your graduate studies, course and language requirements, TA and proctor assignments, or departmental standing and procedures. It remains the responsibility of each graduate student to fulfill departmental curricular guidelines, and to discuss their course selections with their advisor and/or the DGS. The DGS holds regular office hours (which can be found on the TAPS website), or you may make an appointment by email.

### What are the details concerning program facilities and technology services?

#### Faculty and Graduate Offices

Faculty offices are primarily located on the second Floor and Basement Floor of Lyman Hall. The Department's Administrative Office is on the first floor, in room 106. The Department Chair's Office is also on the first floor, inside the main office. Students serving as TAs will have access to Lyman 009 and have priority for the use of that room as a space to hold office hours and related tasks. It will be important for all users to coordinate schedules in making equitable use of the room. Office hours should be reported to Jo Bynum as soon as possible and posted outside the door to alert your students to your schedule. If you need keys to 009, please contact the Facilities and Events Manager, New person's info 401-863-6951). For more information about our facilities, please see our website.

#### Graduate Lounge

The grad lounge is located in Lyman 213. You will be assigned an individual mailbox there. Only grads, faculty, and staff have key access to the lounge, so any deliveries or notes/papers from undergraduate students should be left in the general graduate student mailbox in the main office. Mail is delivered from the general mailbox to personal boxes once daily by one of the graduate students. It contains computers and a printer, as well as a small refrigerator. There is also a

telephone (401-863-3272). Please note it has no outgoing long distance or voicemail capability, but can be used to receive calls, call on-campus or to make local calls. Students are expected to furnish their own supplies for their coursework and/or personal communications. Personal and research needs do not receive administrative support such as typing, copying etc. Please report any technical problems with the computers in the grad lounge to our IT person, Eric Scantlebury ([eric\\_scantlebury@brown.edu](mailto:eric_scantlebury@brown.edu)). Be aware that IT does not provide support for privately owned computers or mobile devices. If the printer in the grad lounge is out of ink, please let Jo know as soon as possible.

### **Computer Clusters and Training Elsewhere on Campus**

Computer clusters, scanners, and printers can also be found in Brown's university libraries. Training in a wide variety of software applications is offered by of Computing and Information Services (CIS).

### **Libraries**

The main humanities library at Brown is the John D. Rockefeller Library (aka "the Rock"). Tours of the library can be arranged by request. The main website of the Brown University Libraries is a portal to electronic research tools and services. Brown's library system also includes the Orwig Music Library, and many other small, specialized collections specific to certain departments and programs that you will get to know as you become involved with them. In addition, Brown's library relies on a consortium of local lenders, most immediately the nearby RISD library and the Providence Athenaeum; Brown students can access these collections through our on-line library catalogue, Josiah.

The John Hay Library houses the University Library's collections of rare books and manuscripts, the University Archives, and many special collections on a wide variety of topics. Notable areas of strength include American literature and popular culture, political and diplomatic history, the history of science, book arts and graphics.

The John Carter Brown Library is an internationally renowned, constantly growing collection of primary historical sources pertaining to the Americas, both North and South, before ca. 1825.

The Performing Arts Librarian is Laura Stokes. Based in Orwig Music Library, she works on collections and research in subjects covered by TAPS and the Music Department. She maintains the [Performing Arts guide](#) (which includes links to the Routledge Performance Archive and Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive collection, among others). If you have items you would like the library to purchase, or if you would like to have a library consultation on a project, please let her know. Her office is Orwig 108. The best way to reach her is via email ([laura\\_stokes@brown.edu](mailto:laura_stokes@brown.edu)).

Brown students also have borrowing privileges at the RISD's Fleet Library located at 15 Westminister Street.

Graduate students writing a dissertation or thesis may apply for their own study carrel. The application for this can be found on the library website. In addition to providing you with a place to work, a carrel is useful because you can charge limited circulation books to your carrel for longer periods, rather than charging them to your ID card for a short loan. Books charged to your carrel must be left on the carrel; they cannot be removed from the library unless charged to your ID. No books may be placed on your carrel without charging them out to the carrel at the

circulation desk. Lockers are also available for graduate student use. Keys may be obtained from the circulation desk.

## How does TAPS communicate?

### Email

Most departmental announcements and much of the daily information flow are communicated via email. Therefore, it is extremely important that you establish your account by mid-July prior to your enrollment, that you check your Brown email regularly, respond to requests for information or meetings in a timely manner, and that you keep the office staff informed of any changes to your contact information. If you wish to forward your Brown email to another email address, you can do it immediately after activating your Brown account, but please be aware you will need to use your Brown email and credentials to log in to computer clusters, Banner, course websites and to access the library from off-campus. Students are urged to check their email and mailboxes regularly, as meetings and special events may be announced on short notice.

The department also maintains Brown email contact info and bios for all graduate students on the website at <http://www.brown.edu/academics/theatre-arts-performance-studies/graduate-students>. If you would like to submit (or change) a bio and/or picture at any time, please contact Jo Bynum.

If you are teaching or TAing in a given semester, please get in the habit of using **your Brown email addresses in all correspondence with students and also using your Brown credentials to log into Banner (selfservice.brown.edu)**. The system will not recognize you any other way and using dueling emails can cause logistical headaches for your students and the staff.

### Listservs

There are several Department email listservs/newsletters that you will be automatically subscribed to when you activate your Brown email address. Subscription to **TAPSGRAD** is restricted to Brown TAPS grad students (MFAs and PhDs), grad faculty and associated artists. There is also a **TAPSPHD** listserv limited to PhD students and affiliated faculty and associated artists. You will be assigned to both of them if you are a PhD, and to TAPSGRAD as an MFA. Listservs provide a forum for all kinds of communication relevant to the TAPS grad community, including lecture announcements, calls for papers, job and grant leads, social events, questions, etc. You are also automatically subscribed to “This Week at TAPS” – the weekly bulletin of upcoming events in the Department that is sent out weekly during the Fall and Spring semesters. If you are not receiving regular departmental notices or are unsure how the listservs should be used, please contact Jo Bynum.

## How are Graduate Students represented in/to the department?

**Graduate Liaison to the Faculty** – This person attends most faculty meetings as the representative of the interests of the graduate students at TAPS and in communication with the DGS. This position normally rotates annually among the graduate students, and is elected by the graduate students.

**Graduate Student DDIAP representative**—This person attends monthly DDIAP meetings and advises the committee on issues in relation to graduate climate and diversity and inclusion concerns and initiatives.

**Graduate Student Files** – The Department maintains a file for every graduate student. Your file is a record of your graduate career at Brown that is used to help the faculty assess your progress and to establish internal evaluations (see below). Most internal documentation (such as funding awards from the Graduate School or Department, the passage of language exams, etc.) will be entered into your file for you. You have the right to view your file, and you have the right to submit documentation to your file. It is in your best interest to make sure that all of your achievements are documented. For example, if you receive an external grant or honor, you should submit a copy of the award letter to your file via Jo Bynum.

### **How are graduate students evaluated? How is a student’s “standing” in the program determined?**

It is important for students to receive feedback on their performance in the program and candid evaluations of their progress toward their degrees. At the end of every semester, the faculty meets as a group to discuss each student’s performance and participation in courses, their performance as a TA or proctor, and, when appropriate, their completion of program requirements and progress on the dissertation. During this faculty meeting each student is ranked according to the Graduate School’s standard “standing” rankings of “good,” “satisfactory,” or “warning.” Areas needing improvement are identified and concerns are voiced. Students receive comments summarizing these evaluations as a written report from the DGS at the end of each semester, and are encouraged to use these comments as an occasion for checking in with their advisor and the DGS with any questions or concerns about what the program’s expectations are, and how best to meet them. “Good” standing is standard; “Satisfactory” standing is granted when there is concern about the student’s capacity to complete the program requirements in the appropriate time-frame; and “warning” indicates that the student is at risk of losing eligibility for continued enrollment and financial support. Reasons for receiving “Satisfactory” or “Warning” status can vary from having multiple incompletes in coursework to failing to pass or complete subsequent degree requirements, e.g. Qualifying Assessment, Comps Exams, Dissertation Proposal, or the Dissertation.

### **What if I have a grievance?**

Brown’s Graduate School has adopted a University-wide grievance procedure for graduate students which is available to read here: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/graduate-student-grievance-procedures>

In accordance with this University-wide policy, PhD students in TAPS are encouraged to first bring any major concerns about their experiences in the program and/or at Brown—including issues or conflicts with faculty, students, or staff—to the Director of Graduate Studies. Note that the DGS is considered a “responsible employee” according to the terms of Brown’s compliance with Title IX. **This means that if matters of potential gender-based discrimination, harassment, or abuse are brought to the DGS’s attention, the DGS is legally bound to report them to Brown’s Title IX office.** More information can be found at Brown’s Title IX and Gender Equity office website: <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/title-ix/what-title-ix>

The DGS can direct you to confidential resources on campus to address such matters if you prefer. If the Director of Graduate Studies is unable to support a grievance or solve any issues, the grievance may be taken to the chair of the department. If these measures are not adequate or at any time that the student wishes the student may take their concerns to the appropriate Dean in the Graduate School or the University Ombuds office which are specifically equipped to help you address potential issues or conflicts.

A current list of Graduate School Deans with contact information and purview can be found here: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/about/deans-staff-0>

The University Ombuds Office provides [confidential, neutral, independent and informal](#) assistance to faculty, staff, postdocs, graduate students and medical students who have [concerns](#) arising from or affecting their life at Brown. The office is an excellent source of support for those in the Brown community who want to develop options for addressing a particular concern or who may wish to consider learning how to deal with issues on their own. More information is available here: <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/ombudsperson/>

### **What if one of my students has a grievance or issue during my time as a TA/Proctor/Teaching Fellow?**

If, as graduate instructors, one of your students has a grievance, or has concerns about your/the instructors teaching and you cannot resolve the problem yourself, you should consult with the course supervisor or faculty evaluator. If the issue cannot be resolved at that point, you should take the matter to the DGS. You may also take the issue to an undergraduate dean if there are significant concerns with a student, such as the student has stopped showing up to class and/or responding to communication.

For more on leaves and other status changes please consult the Graduate School handbook. Material about readmission after a leave (including childbirth accommodation, family leave of absence, personal leave and medical leave) can be found there as well.

### **What is the Exchange Scholar Program?**

Brown participates in an Exchange Scholar Program that enables advanced graduate students to study for one or two semesters in the graduate school of participating institutions, including the University of California at Berkeley, Brown, the University of Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Stanford, and Yale. The exchange provides graduate students with the opportunity to draw upon the particular strengths of the exchange institution and to explore their discipline from a different perspective. Courses taken and research conducted with faculty members at one of the institutions above will be registered on the academic record and official transcript at Brown. Students are eligible to be Exchange Scholars only after completing an academic year of study in a doctoral degree program at Brown. To participate in this program, you must pay tuition for full enrollment at your home institution and remain an active student while studying as an exchange scholar at the host institution. The host institution will charge for student health services if that is not included as part of tuition; the student may purchase either school's student health insurance. Students with external fellowships can continue that support away from Brown; students may hold a TA position



at Brown while studying at Harvard. The program has also benefited students whose advisors are on sabbatical or have taken a new position at one of the participating institutions. More information can be found on the grad school website at <http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/exchange-scholar-program>.

Students who are studying abroad are strongly encouraged to register the trip with the Brown University Global Assistance Program. This program provides 24-hour worldwide medical, security and travel assistance, including emergency evacuation. Please visit the website for more information and the access code to Brown's International SOS portal at: [https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/safety/resources/international\\_sos](https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/safety/resources/international_sos).

**Cross-Registration at Harvard University:** There is a long-standing agreement between Harvard and Brown to allow cross-registration of graduate students in courses in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences only without paying tuition to the host institution. To do this, you must get the appropriate forms from the Registrar's Office and obtain the signatures of the director of each graduate program and a dean from each Graduate School. If the student wants to take an entire semester's course work at Harvard, he or she should enroll in the Exchange Scholar program. Ordinarily, this option is only recommended for more advanced students.

### What does the Graduate School need me to do once I get to campus?

Please make sure to look over the [New Student Checklist](#) that the Graduate School maintains. **This includes state and federal tax paperwork, which, if neglected, will prevent you from being able to register for classes or receive your stipend.** If you have any questions about any of these requirements, please ask the DGS or Jo in the main office.

### Can I get mail at the department?

Yes. The Department mailing address is:

Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies  
Box 1897  
Brown University  
Providence, RI 02912

The physical address of Lyman Hall is 83 Waterman Street, Providence RI 02912.

All mail sent to the Department goes first to the general graduate mailbox in the main office. It is delivered to graduate students' mailboxes in the grad student lounge by whichever graduate student checks the mail first on any given day. All regular mail (USPS) should be sent to (your name) at Box 1897, although your routine "domestic" mail (bills, correspondence, and personal packages) should be sent to your home address whenever possible. The mailroom refers to both department and box numbers when sorting mail. Therefore, the use of a complete address is recommended. Packages from other courier services (i.e., UPS, FedEx) may be sent to (your name) at the Waterman Street address. It's a good idea to give either Chris or Jo a heads up if you are having a package delivered, but we recommend you use this option only when necessary as we have a limited amount of space in the office for storage of packages.

## What about parking? Or housing?

- **Parking**

Parking on streets near TAPS is metered during weekday business hours (until 6pm) and heavily monitored by the police. Free on-street parking near campus is possible, but one must usually look several blocks from Lyman in order to find it and it's usually restricted to two-hour blocks. There are Brown-maintained parking lots for which a permit can be purchased but the wait lists can be very long, sometimes years long. *Meter readers are aggressive and efficient, and it is almost certain that improperly parked vehicles will be ticketed. It is difficult and expensive to park near campus on a regular basis, and is discouraged.* Alternatively, Brown offers free transportation to all full-time students/faculty/staff with a Brown ID on any bus or trolley operated by RIPTA, Rhode Island's public transportation system. Zipcar also operates several lots around campus. There is also a campus 24-hour shuttle service. Consult the Transportation Office at 401-863-3157 for more information.

- **Housing**

Housing is a matter of personal preference; however, you should be aware that there are several resources you may find helpful in making your living arrangements. The Brown graduate community listserv, GSBB-L, is often used to exchange information about available or desired housing. (Subscription works on the same model as our departmental listserv.) The Graduate School itself offers limited on-campus housing for grad students (See Graduate School website). You may also wish to consult with the University Auxiliary Housing office, which maintains a housing bulletin board on campus as well as online. Craigslist.org is also a very helpful resource. Please check the Graduate Student Council Website for more information.

## What other campus resources are available to me?

- **Diversity Initiatives** provide assistance with recording a lived or chosen name change into University systems to support *T\* students* (Graduate Center, 4<sup>th</sup> floor).
- **Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** coordinates and facilitates services for students with physical, psychological, and learning disabilities, and temporary injuries (20 Benevolent Street, 1<sup>st</sup> floor).
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** provides free confidential counseling (J. Walter Wilson, Room 516, 401-863-3476). CAPS offers Saturday appointments for graduate students from 9am-4pm during the academic year at Health Services, 13 Brown Street.
- **Maria Suarez, Associate Dean of Student Support in the Graduate School**, is dedicated to serving Masters and PhD students (Horace Mann 110, [Maria\\_Suarez@brown.edu](mailto:Maria_Suarez@brown.edu), 401-863-1802).
- **Conference and Research Travel Funds** are available through the Graduate School. See the [Conference Travel](#) page for additional information.

**What sort of financial resources are available to support research-related expenses, i.e. to conduct fieldwork, travel to an archive, attend a summer program relevant to your research, or present work at a scholarly conference?**

In general, the Department is committed to helping to support the scholarly and professional development of PhD students by providing supplemental funding to offset costs directly associated with furthering your work as a graduate student and your career as a scholar.

Because the specific needs vary from year to year based on the current cohort of students, there is no single, guaranteed amount of funding set aside per student per year. In recent years, we have been able to provide between \$500 and \$1,000 of Departmental support for each PhD student per academic year. We make every effort to provide a fair and equitable distribution of the limited annual budget that is available for this purpose.

In addition to limited annual Departmental support, PhD students are eligible to apply for funding to support research-related travel and other expenses from a number of other sources:

- The Brown Graduate School:
  - Graduate Travel Award: \$700 for one conference per year  
<https://graduateschool.brown.edu/financing-support/internal-funding-appointments/graduate-school-travel-funds/conference-travel-fund>
  - International Travel Fund: \$600-\$1,000 per year  
<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/financing-support/phd-funding/internal-funding-appointments/international-travel-fund>
  - Brown Graduate Student Council: \$300 per year  
<http://students.brown.edu/gsc/resources/funding/conference-funding/>
  - Doctoral Research Travel Grant: up to \$1,000 per year  
<https://graduateschool.brown.edu/financing-support/internal-funding-appointments/graduate-school-travel-funds/doctoral-research>
  - Joukowsky Summer Research Award: \$500-\$1500  
<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/financing-support/internal-funding-appointments/joukowsky-summer-research-award>
  
- External professional organizations/conferences where you wish to present (stipends for graduate students, work-study opportunities: ASTR, ATHE, ASA, etc.): check websites for these organizations.

If you have a specific expense for which you would like to request Departmental support, consult with the DGS, your advisor, and Jo Bynum. Departmental support for approved expenses is processed through reimbursement. If your expense is approved, you must provide all relevant receipts and submit an official reimbursement request by following the procedures outlined below.

**Is all graduate funding taxable income? Are taxes withheld from my paychecks?**

The answer will vary based on several factors including US residency status and how you are “appointed” each semester (Fellowship, TA1, TA2, Teaching Fellow, Proctorship).

When you are appointed on a Fellowship—during the semesters when you are on Departmental Fellowship (typically Year 1 and either year 4 or 5 in the TAPS PhD program), or are appointed with the support of an external Fellowship at Brown or from another source (Mellon Foundation, Ford Foundation, etc.) –

taxes will not be withheld from your monthly stipend and you will not receive a W-2. All or part of the amount paid to a US resident student/scholar may be tax-free. See guidelines listed below.

When you are appointed as a TA1, TA2, Teaching Fellow, or Proctor, you are paid as an employee of Brown University; taxes will be automatically withheld from your paycheck and you will receive a W-2 from Brown University. Your pay will be reported by the University as taxable income.

Note that the tax rules are different for International students who are studying at Brown on a visa.

The following information is from the [Brown University Fellowships Policy](#):

### **Fellowship Tax Information for US Resident Student/Scholars**

All or part of the amount paid to a US resident student/scholar may be tax-free. Fellowship payments are tax-free if the following conditions are met:

- Recipient is a candidate for a degree at an educational institution that maintains a regular faculty and curriculum and normally has a regularly enrolled body of students in attendance at the place where it carries on its educational activities; and
- The amounts received are used to pay for tuition and fees required for enrollment or attendance at the educational institution, or for fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for courses at the educational institution.

Fellowship grants must be included in the recipient's gross income when:

- The fellowship is used for incidental expenses, such as room and board, travel, and optional equipment, and
- Amounts received as payments for teaching, research, or other services required as a condition for receiving the scholarship or fellowship grant. However, fellowship payments required by the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program or the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship and Financial Assistance Program are not taxable.

Payments to US residents that are processed through Accounts Payable are not reported to the Internal Revenue Service.

### **Fellowship Information for Foreign National Student/Scholars**

Fellowship payments to foreign national students/scholars are always reportable on a Form 1042s. The payment is taxable unless there is a tax treaty between the United States and the recipient's country of residence that specifically exempts the fellowship payment from taxation. Foreign national students/scholars will receive a Form 1042s reporting the fellowship payment and any taxes withheld.

For more information, refer to [Publication 970](#), Tax Benefits for Education.

### **I am a graduate student appointed on a Fellowship, how and when do I get paid?**

U.S. Residents: Your fellowship will be paid through the payroll system. You will receive your check/direct deposit advice from your department according to the payroll schedule posted under [deadlines and pay dates](#) on the Graduate School website. The amount of fellowship paid to you by Brown University will not be included in a W2 form at year end. The total amount paid to you is listed in the year to date column on your pay stub. Use the amount on your final stub when completing your tax filing for the calendar year.

Non-U.S. Residents: Your fellowship will be paid through the payroll system. You will receive your check/direct deposit advice from your department according to the payroll schedule posted under [deadlines and pay dates](#) on this website. The amount of fellowship paid to you by Brown University will be included in form 1042S at calendar year end. You will receive this form by February 1st and should use this form to complete your tax filing for the calendar year.

## **8. Guidelines for Reimbursements**

### **Theatre Arts & Performance Studies**

**TAPS is currently utilizing the [TAPS Graduate Spending Request](#) form. Please submit the form prior to making any travel plans.**

*An important note on reimbursement request submission deadlines: Due to IRS rules, Brown's Controller's Office has a strict deadline for submission of reimbursement requests. To meet the deadline, you must submit your air fare, conference fee and pre-paid lodging receipts to Jo Bynum, [nita\\_bynum@brown.edu](mailto:nita_bynum@brown.edu), within 30 days of purchase. Per Diem or hotel/lodging reimbursement requests must be submitted to Jo within 30 days of your return as determined by your travel itinerary. If you have questions, please contact Jo.*

**Please Note:** Per the [Brown Expense Reimbursement Policy](#) certain transactions are not reimbursable (see Section 3.1 Unallowable Expenses). **Please submit the TAPS Graduate Spending Request form prior to making any payments other than what is listed below.**

**How to Submit:** Please use the [FY 2024 Graduate Student Reimbursement Request](#) Google form linked here and below. These will walk you through the submission process step-by-step. The more complete your reimbursement request, the faster you will receive your reimbursement. This is the documentation you should have to complete the forms:

- **Graduate Travel Award.** If you have an award from the Graduate School (e.g., Graduate Travel Award, Doctoral Research, etc.), please forward me the email confirmation you received from the Graduate Council. If you have more than one travel award, please forward each of the email confirmations that apply to your trip.

- **Business Purpose for travel.** Are you going to conduct research? Where and why? Are you attending a conference or are you presenting at a conference? If you are presenting, include those details along with a copy of the conference brochure listing you as a presenter.
- **Conference Fees/Theatre Tickets.** Please include the payment receipt showing your name, fee amount, and payment information. *Also, please include the screenshot of the matching bank transaction. (Paid prior to travel) -*
- **Plane/train/bus itinerary.** The controller's office requires us to submit the detailed itinerary, preferably the one sent to you by the carrier you are using, that includes the following. Please note that if a spouse/partner/child travels with you, you will only be reimbursed the price of your personal travel. *Also, please include a screenshot of your matching bank transaction. (Paid prior to travel) -*
  - airline logo
  - name of traveler
  - dates & times of travel
  - class of travel (coach, economy, business)
  - full cost of the ticket
  - payment information showing you personally paid for the ticket and the last four digits of your credit card.
- **Per Diem.** Instead of submitting individual meal receipts to reimburse meals we will request Per Diem payment. I need to know the exact town you stayed in and the exact dates you were there. I will pull the IRS-allowed per diem rate from online and submit that with your proof of travel to the controller's office. The number of days to be reimbursed will be based on your flight/train/bus itinerary. **(Paid post travel)**
- **Lodging.** Unless you show the lodging was fully prepaid, if you are requesting reimbursement for a hotel, please keep in mind that Brown requires the receipt you receive **when you check out of the hotel (sometimes called a folio), showing your name, the dates of your stay, all charges associated with the room, and payment information including your name and the last four digits of your credit card.** The receipt must show that the room was occupied and that a \$0.00 balance is due on the room. If you use Airbnb, send the reservation receipt showing the full amount due and payment in full with your payment info (name, amount, last four digits of your credit card). *Also, please include a screenshot of your matching bank transaction. (Paid post-travel unless prepaid) -*
- **Ground Transportation.** If you use Lyft/Uber/Taxis to get around while traveling, submit your electronic receipts and matching bank transactions. If you need to rent a car, please refer to the [Annual Spending Guidelines](#) car rental rates section for the Enterprise/National contract link prior to renting. On your return you need to submit the rental application/receipt and the matching bank transaction. If you drive your own car, we will need a Google Map screenshot showing the route you took and the total roundtrip mileage. You will be reimbursed based on the mileage rate listed on the [Annual Spending Guidelines](#). *Also, please include screenshot(s) of the matching bank transaction(s). (Paid post-travel)*
- **Non-Travel Purchases (i.e., books, tickets, etc.)** – to request reimbursement for non-travel purchases, please send the receipts (preferably PDF or photo) and *screenshot(s) of the matching bank transaction(s)*. Graduate students may use no more than \$250 of their research funds for book reimbursements. *It is important to submit the TAPS Graduate Spending Request form prior to making any payments/purchases that might fall into this category.*

Useful links:

- [Brown Travel Policy](#)
- [Graduate School Travel Funding](#)

- [FY 2024 Graduate Student Reimbursement Request Form](#)
- [University Reimbursement Policy](#)