



Office of International Programs

BROWN UNIVERSITY



So you want to  
go abroad  
*and*  
write an honors  
thesis...

If you're looking at this guide, you're probably considering two things: 1) **going abroad**, and 2) **writing an honors thesis**. This is a good place to start, although please keep in mind that any information you find in these pages is meant to serve solely as a guide and any specific questions should be addressed to the appropriate person in the department.

Keeping all of that in mind, the following pages are the result of a series of questions we sent to every department. Some responded, others did not. Some responded at greater length and with more specificity than others. The concentrations are listed in alphabetical order, so flip through and see if your department is in here. If it is, take note of what it says; if not, look up the department in the phone book and contact them directly, or speak with your advisor.

What we learned from doing this is that **ALMOST ALL DEPARTMENTS HAVE SOME THINGS IN COMMON**. (Probably even those who did not respond in a timely fashion.) Basically, if you are at all thinking you may write a thesis before you go abroad, you should be in contact with someone in your department about it, to make the process go as smoothly as possible

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and also to ensure that you work with a professor of your choosing. Many departments want to see that you've fulfilled certain research or seminar requirements.

In most cases, students will find that it is possible (although not always simple) to initiate a thesis while abroad, however, professor/advisor choice may be limited if you wait that long. And, of course, in some cases, it is not possible to do this at all.

Students who wish to incorporate some aspect of their time abroad in the thesis are also encouraged to maintain extensive contact with their department at Brown. They are also encouraged to obtain materials they may need and make contacts abroad before they come back. Remember that in some cases, you may wish to plan a return trip to tie up any loose ends or conduct further research. In other cases, you may be *required* to do this.

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## **Department: American Civilization**

**Contact:** Position is rotating, please contact department.

**Junior year requirements:** It is strongly recommended that students take AC 0180 during the junior year (spring), however, students can skip it if they come in prior to their semester abroad and express a desire *and* preparation for writing an honors thesis.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semesters of independent studies.

**Foreign Language:** Students wishing to write in a foreign language should contact the department directly to find out if this will be possible.

Students are required to choose an advisor before going abroad if they wish to write an honors thesis.

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## **Department: Anthropology**

**Contact:** Position is rotating, please contact department.

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** Seniors writing theses are required to take/have taken AN 0190, AN 0198 and usually two independent research courses.

**Foreign Language:** It is not possible to write an Anthropology thesis in a foreign language.

Honors Anthropology students are **STRONGLY** urged to begin working with an advisor during the sixth semester as this will make everything much easier and will aid in planning. Most students have advisors before going abroad.

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**Department: Classics**

**Contact:** Joseph Pucci ([Joseph\\_Pucci@brown.edu](mailto:Joseph_Pucci@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** It is recommended that students take “Honors Conference” (CL 0199) in the fall semester and “Independent Reading” (CL 0191) in the spring semester if they wish to write a thesis.

**Foreign Language:** Ask.

There are few hurdles for Classics students who wish to write theses and study abroad. There is no requirement to choose an advisor before going abroad, and it is possible to initiate a thesis while abroad.

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## **Department:** Comparative Literature

**Contact:** Position is rotating, please contact department.

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** Completion of prospectus with 2 faculty signatures by Oct. 15. Students may enroll in CoLit 198 in one or both semesters, only one for concentration credit. A substantial portion of the thesis must be submitted by end of sem. 1; March 15 submission of full draft, April 15 final deadline.

**Foreign Language:** Depending on the thesis advisor's ability to read another language, the thesis may be submitted in an agreed upon language other than English.

Students are required to choose an advisor before going abroad if they wish to write an honors thesis (though it may be possible to initiate a thesis while abroad). Seniors who wish to go abroad and do a thesis are encouraged to speak with an advisor (this is a very difficult prospect to carry off with success). If students have a double or joint concentration, it *may* be possible to submit the thesis to a second department—please consult an advisor.

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## **Department: Development Studies**

**Contact:** Patrick Heller, Sociology ([Patrick\\_Heller@brown.edu](mailto:Patrick_Heller@brown.edu)), Paget Henry, Sociology ([Paget\\_Henry@brown.edu](mailto:Paget_Henry@brown.edu)), James Mahoney, Sociology ([James\\_Mahoney@brown.edu](mailto:James_Mahoney@brown.edu)), Daniel Smith, Anthropology ([Daniel\\_Smith@brown.edu](mailto:Daniel_Smith@brown.edu)), Josephina Saldena, English ([Josephina\\_Saldena@brown.edu](mailto:Josephina_Saldena@brown.edu)), Louis Putterman, Economics ([Louis\\_Putterman@brown.edu](mailto:Louis_Putterman@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** One-semester senior seminar

**Foreign Language:** English only.

It is not necessary for Development Studies students to have chosen an advisor before going abroad. Theses can be initiated from abroad.

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## **Department: Education**

**Contact:** Luther Spoehr ([Luther\\_Spoehr@brown.edu](mailto:Luther_Spoehr@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** Students must apply to do a thesis at the end of the sixth semester. Students must have completed at least one course on research methods (ED 0110 or ED 0111); in some cases courses from other departments may be substituted, with permission. The application must include a brief description of topic and signed agreement with a faculty advisor.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semester thesis seminar.

**Foreign Language:** There is no specific policy about writing education theses in a foreign language, address specific questions to the department.

The GPA requirement for Education is 3.5 by the end of the sixth semester. Although an application is required to write a thesis, some students have successfully applied from abroad via the web. These students have usually completed the necessary course requirements before leaving.

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**Department:** English (Creative Writing)

**Contact:** Gale Nelson ([Gale\\_Nelson@brown.edu](mailto:Gale_Nelson@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** Students have the choice of one of the following for one semester: Thesis/Capstone workshop, Independent Study with advisor, or Advanced Workshop in thesis genre.

**Foreign Language:** An entire thesis may not be written in a foreign language, although, with the permission of and at the discretion of the student's advisor, portions may be written in a foreign language.

It is not necessary for Creative Writing students to have chosen an advisor before going abroad. Theses can be initiated from abroad.

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## **Department: Environmental Studies**

**Contact:** Individual advisor.

**Junior year requirements:** ES 0192, offered only in the spring.

Negotiations out of this requirement are difficult.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semester thesis seminar.

**Foreign Language:** ES thesis may not be written in a foreign language.

Students must choose a thesis advisor before going abroad, but keep in mind that this choice is NOT BINDING. Also, while it is possible to initiate a thesis while abroad, doing an “international topic” without a lot of advance preparation (e.g. meeting with advisor *before* going abroad) may prove exceedingly difficult.

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## **Department: French Studies**

**Contact:** Position is rotating, contact department.

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** If a student wants to write a thesis he/she must take the senior thesis seminar. If not, he/she is required to take the senior seminar, which is always offered the second semester.

**Foreign Language:** French

It is not necessary for students to choose an advisor before going abroad. It is certainly possible to initiate a thesis while studying abroad.

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**Department: Geological Sciences**

**Contact:** Jan Tullis ([Jan\\_Tullis@brown.edu](mailto:Jan_Tullis@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** A senior thesis requires at least one semester of independent research (GE 0191 or GE 0192).

**Foreign Language:** English only.

Students studying Geology do not have to choose an advisor before going abroad. They may initiate theses while abroad.

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**Department: German Studies**

**Contact:** Carol Poore ([Carol\\_Poore@brown.edu](mailto:Carol_Poore@brown.edu))

Students in German studies wishing to do a thesis and study abroad are asked to contact Carol Poore with any questions.

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**Department:** Hispanic Studies

**Contact:** Position is rotating, please contact department.

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** One-semester senior seminar

**Foreign Language:** The thesis may be submitted in an agreed upon language other than English.

Advisors do not have to be chosen before leaving, and theses can usually be initiated while abroad. Seniors wishing to study abroad and write a thesis while abroad, are advised of the following: “None of the thesis requirements nor study abroad requirements reference such a possibility. A request to do a thesis abroad would result in a departmental meeting to determine policy.”

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## **Department: History of Art and Architecture**

**Contact:** The undergraduate supervisor.

**Junior year requirements:** Student should have taken at least one seminar before the end of junior year. The goal of this is to ensure that students will have written at least one major research paper in the department.

**Senior year requirements:** The thesis is a “two-semester” undertaking and students should keep this in mind.

**Foreign Language:** Depending on the thesis advisor’s ability to read another language, the thesis may be submitted in an agreed upon language other than English.

Most requirements in the HAA department are negotiable to some extent. The one that is NOT is that students wishing to write a senior thesis must have a 3.6 GPA before undertaking the thesis. It is advised that you contact the department with any special circumstances. (Advisors do not have to be chosen before leaving, and theses can usually be initiated while abroad.)

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## **Department: History**

**Contact:** Honors Supervisor, see website:

<http://www.brown.edu/Departments/History/>

**Junior year requirements:** On-campus concentrators must take HI 92 in the spring of their junior year. Those abroad will still be responsible for writing an extended thesis prospectus, due the first day of class, senior year. No exceptions.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semester thesis seminar.

**Foreign Language:** History Theses may not be submitted in a foreign language.

Students in the History department do not necessarily have to choose an advisor before going abroad, and it is possible to initiate a thesis while abroad. However, as in most departments, it is advised that students start the process as soon as they can.

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## **Department: International Relations**

**Contact:** Claudia Elliot ([Claudia\\_Elliot@brown.edu](mailto:Claudia_Elliot@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None, in terms of class. However, applications to do theses are due the first week in April, whether students are at Brown or abroad.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semester thesis seminar.

**Foreign Language:** IR theses may not be submitted in a foreign language.

Advisors do not necessarily have to be chosen before going abroad, although it is recommended. Seniors who wish to go abroad and do a thesis may not have their cake and eat it, too. IR requires that students are on campus, working with a faculty member for both semesters, thus an advisor must also be on campus for both semesters.

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**Department: Judaic Studies**

**Contact:** Concentration advisor.

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** For students doing theses, there is a required two-semester thesis study sequence to be completed with their advisor.

**Foreign Language:** Theses in Judaic Studies may be written in either English or Hebrew.

Judaic studies requires students to declare that they are doing a thesis by reading period of their junior year. However, it is advisable for the student to have discussed his/her intentions with an advisor in the semester preceding the decision. Thus, they recommend that students abroad during the spring term of the junior year to initiate contact with a faculty member in Judaic Studies to discuss their options. Keep in mind that if a student does not do this, he/she is not precluded from doing a thesis, however he/she is still required to make arrangements with a faculty member in the department, many of whom will require that the student have taken a class with them in the previous three years.

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## **Department: Latin American Studies**

**Contact:** David Lindstrom ([David.Lindstrom@brown.edu](mailto:David.Lindstrom@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** For students writing theses, there is a year-long thesis semester.

**Foreign Language:** Theses may be written in Spanish, Portuguese or English. It may also be submitted to those departments.

While students **do not** have to choose an advisor before they go abroad, it is **not possible** to initiate the thesis process while studying abroad.

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## **Department: Political Science**

**Contact:** Newell Stultz ([Newell.Stultz@brown.edu](mailto:Newell.Stultz@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** For students writing theses, there is a year-long thesis seminar to be taken in the senior year.

**Foreign Language:** A political science thesis cannot be exclusively written in a foreign language.

Students majoring in this department **often** decide to do theses once abroad. This IS possible, although it is recommended that you contact the department as soon as you can. For students who choose to go abroad during the senior year, they must remain at Brown during the fall semester.

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## **Department: Psychology**

**Contact:** Honors advisor, currently Leslie Welch, although this is a rotating position.

**Junior year requirements:** Students in psychology need to fulfill a laboratory requirement before they graduate. (Most do it in the junior year, although some do it in the sophomore or senior year). Keep in mind, though, that students doing theses *must* finish the lab requirement before they start their theses: If going abroad, that usually means doing it in the fall of junior year.

**Senior year requirements:** There is both a senior seminar requirement as well as a two-semester thesis seminar in the senior year for students wishing to write theses.

**Foreign Language:** A psychology thesis cannot be written in a foreign language.

Students majoring in this department **cannot** initiate a thesis while they are studying abroad, and if they wish to do one, they should contact the department and choose an advisor **before** leaving.

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## **Department: Public Policy**

**Contact:** Any concentration advisor, rotating positions.

**Junior year requirements:** It is highly recommended that students finish the program evaluation course before their senior year. It is also imperative that they have no more than three courses left to fulfill concentration requirements during the senior year. Fewer would be better.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semester thesis seminar.

**Foreign Language:** Public Policy theses may not be written in a foreign language.

Some students in Public Policy ask to do “foreign” topics for theses. While this is not prohibited, it is not encouraged. It is generally hard to do, unless students will have a chance to return to the country again during the senior year for follow-up research. It is also tough to get adequate advising for such topics. It is required that PP students speak with an advisor before going abroad if they wish to write theses.

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## **Department: Slavic Languages**

**Contact:** Masako Fidler ([Masako Fidler@brown.edu](mailto:Masako_Fidler@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None currently, although the department is in the process of implementing capstone courses for juniors and seniors.

**Senior year requirements:** Two-semester senior seminars are currently being worked in to the concentration. Contact Prof. Fidler for more information.

**Foreign Language:** Speak with advisor.

It is possible for students to initiate theses while abroad, as it is not necessary to have chosen an advisor before going abroad. Slavic Studies has introduced SL 0191, an independent research project course in the language (usually Czech and/or Russian); prerequisites are either CZ 0060 or RU 0060 or placement by language coordinator. Students who have advanced language skills and wish to explore selected topics in depth can now take this course (up to two semesters) beyond the third-year language level.

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**Department: Sociology**

**Contact:** Undergraduate concentration chair, rotates.

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** One-semester thesis seminar. Also, honors students are required to do two semesters of independent study with an advisor.

**Foreign Language:** Nope.

You need to have an advisor before going abroad, however a topic may be initiated from abroad. **HOWEVER**, keep in mind that anything involving human subjects requires approval to conduct field research. Right now, it's practically impossible for students to get this kind of approval in advance.

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## **Department: Theater, Speech & Dance**

**Contact:** John Emigh ([John\\_Emigh@brown.edu](mailto:John_Emigh@brown.edu))

**Junior year requirements:** None.

**Senior year requirements:** Students must take a one-semester senior seminar in their senior year.

**Foreign Language:** Theater, Speech & Dance theses may not be submitted in a foreign language.

Students in this department **do not** have to choose an advisor before going abroad (although it is recommended), and it is **possible** to initiate a thesis while abroad. Seniors who wish to go abroad during their senior year are also able to do theses, although it would be difficult to be gone during the spring semester and do it.

\*The departmental procedure is for students to apply for honors in the spring semester of their junior year. Application involves forwarding an internal transcript and submitting a prospectus for the thesis project. This can be done by e-mail, but it requires a fair amount of initiative to do so.

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## **Department: Urban Studies**

**Contact:** Vernon Henderson (Send e-mail to [J\\_Henderson@brown.edu](mailto:J_Henderson@brown.edu))

Students are asked to the director (Vernon Henderson) with specific questions. Basically, though, before going abroad, students should have an advisor, in addition to a second reader and a basic idea for the project.