

# GETTING ORIENTED: FOR ENTERING STUDENTS

*Settling into Brown takes place on three levels: your personal living arrangements; becoming acquainted with the university and its resources; and settling into the department.*

## LIVING IN RI

By the time you read this, you'll probably already have found a place to live. If you haven't, information about basics like housing and childcare can be found on the Graduate School website. Other good sources of information are the websites of the City of Providence and the State of Rhode Island (for information about getting a Rhode Island driver's license, registering your car, registering to vote, etc.). But here are a few things you may find helpful:

## GETTING HERE

### AIRPORT

Providence is served by *TF Green Airport* (about 12 miles from Brown: no easy public transportation, but a quick drive). There's reasonable long-term parking available, and a park-n-fly service on Route 1 just north of the airport.

### BUS SERVICE

There's local bus service, all on *RIPTA*: Brown folks get free rides with a Brown ID, to encourage use of public transportation. All *RIPTA* buses eventually end up downtown at Kennedy Plaza. There's also a *RIPTA* ferry to Newport – it leaves from a dock off Allen's Avenue. There's also bus service to Boston, New York, Cape Cod, and elsewhere, leaving from either Kennedy Plaza or the Bonanza station off I-95.

### TRAIN

The train station is right downtown, across from the Providence Place Mall: it's about a ten minute walk from the campus. Amtrak trains run north to Boston, and south as far as Newport News, Virginia. The MBTA trains run to and from Boston, and cost much less than Amtrak, although they take a lot longer. Buy your tickets at the Café La France in the train station (not at the Amtrak window). Amtrak tickets are often cheaper on-line. There's discounted parking in the underground garage if you take Amtrak.

## TAXIS

You're unlikely to need taxis much, except to get to the airport: to get a cab out to the airport, you should call one well in advance. There is a shuttle service that leaves from Faunce Hall.

## UTILITIES

Cox is the local cable company: they have packages that include phone and internet. National Grid provides both natural gas and electricity. Verizon provides phone service, DSL and FiOS.

## BANKING

The local banks include *Bank of America* (which has major offices in Providence, and bank machines everywhere, including one in *Faunce*, and in the Bookstore lobby: Angell off Thayer. There's also *Citizen's Bank* and *Bank Rhode Island*.

## SUPERMARKETS

On the East Side: there are two *Whole Foods* (also affectionately known as Whole Paycheck): a large one on North Main Street, just north of Olney Street; a smaller one on Waterman Street just past Wayland Avenue in Wayland Square. Both have good parking; both are within walking distance of the University (15 minutes or so).

Also on the East Side is a large, local supermarket: the *East Side Market*, at Pittman and Butler. Larger than Whole Foods, with more choices: they have a large prepared food section, and a kosher butcher available weekly.

There's a *Super Stop N Shop* (large selection, more reasonable prices) on Branch Avenue, off North Main Street. There's also a *Shaw's* in Pawtucket.

## SPECIALITY FOOD MARKETS

There's not much in the way of small local markets on the East Side, although there is a small market and butcher shop on Elmgrove, off Lloyd, a small Portuguese market on Brook Street (near Arnold), and various others.

There are some small markets on Federal Hill, including several that specialize in Italian foods: pasta, cheeses, meats, canned goods, local bread, etc: *Tony's Colonial Market* on Atwell's Avenue even has parking: *Venda Ravioli*, on Di Pasquale Square (also on Atwell's avenue) doesn't. *Not Just Spices*, out on Hope Street, has a range of Indian products. There's a fabulous cheese shop in Wayland Square: *Farmstead*, with corresponding prices. Providence has some terrific local bakeries: *Seven Stars*, on Hope Street; *Olga's Cup and Saucer* (across the Point Street Bridge). Whole Foods and the East Side Market carry these and other local breads. There's a Portuguese bakery on Ives Street, and the *Wayland Bakery*, on

Wayland near Pittman, has many tasty things. *Sciavolo's*, on Atwells Avenue, is another special local institution.

## LAUNDROMATS

If you don't have laundry where you live, there are various local laundromats, including one on Brook Street between Power and Charlesfield. The Laundry Club in Wayland Square is particularly nice, but not that close to campus: they will also do your wash; they have large machines for blankets and such, and they also do dry cleaning. There are lots of local dry cleaners, should you need one, including a "green" cleaners on Elmgrove, off Lloyd. There's a terrific shoe maker in Wayland Square (on Wayland Avenue). There's also now a shoemaker downtown, on Weybosset Street.

## BOOKSTORES

Providence isn't great for bookstores, and you may end up buying most of your books online. The *Brown Bookstore* does stock books for many University courses, and has a decent selection of recent books, Brown author books, etc. The most fun to check out is *Symposium Books*, which specializes in remaindered academic books: now on Thayer Street. There's a small local bookshop on Angell Street in Wayland Square that's best for children's books and the occasional gift book.

## CAFES AND RESTAURANTS

Providence is actually a great city for restaurants, partly because of all the people who go to Johnson and Wales, and then stay and open up restaurants. Many of them are beyond most graduate student budgets, but there are lots of good inexpensive and fun places to eat. You'll find your own favorites. But take time to check out Thayer Street, Wickenden Street, Atwells Avenue (on Federal Hill), Hope Street (around Rochambeau), and elsewhere.

Upscale, but not outrageous, are some local bistros: *Parkside*, on South Main Street (just down the hill); *Downcity*; on Weybosset; *Red Stripe* on Angell Street in Wayland Square; *Paragon*, *Andreas* and *Kartabar*, all on Thayer Street, *Z-Bar and Grill* on Wickenden.

Not surprisingly, the restaurants downtown tend to be the most expensive. If your parents are visiting, or it's a very special occasion, keep in mind: *Gracie's*, *The Café Nuovo*, *Mill's Tavern*, *Nick's on Broadway* [which also has fabulous breakfasts], *Chez Pascal* on Hope Street; the *DeWolf Tavern* in Bristol. People outside Providence have most often heard of *Al Forno* – south of Wickenden – it's Italian, it's very good, and you usually have to wait for a table – but it's by no means the best restaurant in town. *Bacaro*, on South Water Street, is also excellent.

For local cafes, the *Coffee Exchange* on Wickenden is a long-time Providence favorite; *Café Choklad* on North Main (at the foot of Angell St) has unusually good salads and baked goods; *Blue State Coffee* on Thayer; *Seven Stars* (on Hope and also on Broadway), which is also a terrific bakery; *Olga's Cup and Saucer*; the usual *Starbucks*. The Blue Room on campus has decent coffee, and lots of tempting baked goods (muffins, bagels and more). The Brown

Bookstore has a nice café serving Blue State Coffee, and various goodies from local purveyors.

## EMERGENCIES

Providence emergency (fire, police, dire medical emergency) is **911**. The University emergency on-campus number is **3111**. There are blue university emergency phones all over the campus. There is a University security office in Faunce Hall, with an entrance at Brown and Waterman. There's also a Providence Police Substation at Power and Brook.

The closest hospital emergency rooms are *Rhode Island Hospital* (across the Point Street Bridge, then left on Eddy Street) and *the Miriam Hospital* (5<sup>th</sup> street, between North Main Street and Hope Street). It's probably a really good idea to find out exactly how to get to these before you need to know (which we hope you won't ever).

## OTHER INFORMATION

For other information, your fellow students are usually a fine source of information, but please don't hesitate to ask any of the faculty or staff, either. Some of us have lived in Providence many years: others have also moved to Providence in recent years: either way, we should be able to help.

## THE UNIVERSITY

The Graduate School Orientation session will also give you the resources to settle quickly. Most important are:

### BROWN CARD

You will need a student ID, called a Brown Card. You will need to complete an I-9 form in the Graduate School (47 George St.). For this you will need proof of citizenship or permanent residency (usually your passport, social security card, green card, etc.). If you are a citizen/permanent resident of another country, consult the Graduate School website for the paperwork requirements. You will then receive a form which you take to the Brown Card Office (208 Meeting St, between Brown and Thayer), where you are issued a card.

### LIBRARY

The main library is the Rockefeller Library ("the Rock"). Your ID card gives you standard borrowing privileges. You should take an orientation tour at your earliest convenience. When you begin work on your dissertation you can sign up for a carrell and thesis loan privileges. There are other libraries, some more formal than others, scattered throughout campus (e.g., Judaic Studies; Classics; John Hay [rare books]; Orwig Music Library; Science Library; John Carter Brown Library [Early Americana]). Media Services, which loans most

DVDs, is located on the top of the Science Library (and the views of Providence Harbor and the Narragansett are pretty amazing).

## **COMPUTER ACCOUNTS**

Once you receive a Brown ID card you can register for a NetID, which allows you access to the university networks (printing, email, etc.). Do this online at <http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/CIS/activate>. Your Brown email account can be checked from any computer using Brown's email website (email.brown.edu).

## **REGISTRATION**

Shortly after arriving, you may have a formal meeting to discuss your courses. At a minimum this meeting should be with the faculty coordinator of your particular graduate area: it might also include other area faculty and even the Director of Graduate Study. (For more on this, see the Religious Studies Graduate Handbook). Registration is done through Brown's on-line system, called BANNER. If you register for courses which require faculty permission, you will have to give your registration information to the individual faculty member and they'll sign you up. BANNER is still a relatively new system (instituted two years ago) and some faculty haven't entirely figured it out! Be patient.

## **THE DEPARTMENT**

### **WHEN YOU ARRIVE...**

As soon as possible on arriving in Providence, come by the Religious Studies Office (Shirley Miller House, 59 George Street) and see Nicole Vadnais, our Academic Office Coordinator. Nicole will issue you keys to the building, show you your mailbox, give you a code for use on the office photocopy machine, and otherwise tell you what you need to know in order to get going. She and our other office staff member, Tina Creamer, are great resources for graduate students.

### **BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN**

Students in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean will take diagnostic language exams the week before classes begin. As specified in your welcome letter, after these have been evaluated, you'll meet with your program coordinator and perhaps additional faculty to discuss your courses.

Entering graduate students in all areas have meetings with their area advisors to plan their coursework for the year. Prior to this meeting you may want to meet with the other core faculty in your program to discuss your schedule. You should come to this meeting prepared with a tentative plan for your first year courses, and perhaps even beyond.

At this meeting we will also discuss any language requirements that you may have previously fulfilled, as well as transfer credits. If you need to request transfer credits (as you should if

you have an MA), you should obtain the proper form from the Academic Office Coordinator (or the Graduate Student website), complete it, and bring it to this initial meeting.