Behavioral and Social Health Sciences Doctoral Program
Student Handbook

Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences
School of Public Health
Brown University

2021-2022
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INTRODUCTION

Students of Behavioral and Social Health Sciences (BSHS) employ behavioral and social science theory and methods to understand contemporary health problems. Research and scholarship in BSHS use the scientific method, drawing from traditions in the behavioral sciences (such as psychology and social neuroscience) that focus on individual, dyadic, and small group levels of analysis, as well as those of the social sciences that focus on the influences of social systems on human behavior (e.g., sociology, anthropology, demography, economics, and cultural studies). Scholarship in BSHS is inherently multidisciplinary, as health behaviors are conceptualized within a social ecological context that considers cultural, social, organizational, psychological, and biological determinants. Furthermore, both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies may be used to understand the causes, characteristics, and consequences of behaviors that impact the health of individuals and society. Faculty and students engage in research that seeks to identify social, psychological, and behavioral risk factors for disease and illness; understand the psychosocial determinants of health care; understand health protective behaviors, relationships, and institutions; and develop and evaluate health-promoting interventions that are grounded in behavioral and social science theory. Graduates of the BSHS doctoral program are prepared for careers in basic and applied research settings such as academia, government and non-governmental organizations, and health care.

The signature strengths of Behavioral and Social Health Sciences doctoral training at Brown University include health behavior interventions development, evaluation, and implementation, as well as collaboration across disciplines and between researchers and communities. Program-affiliated faculty have expertise in the following research areas: alcohol use and misuse; chronic disease prevention and management, drug use and misuse; global health; health disparities and health equity; HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and reproductive health; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health; obesity, nutrition, and physical activity; and smoking and tobacco use.

The information contained in this Handbook describes departmental policies and procedures for students pursuing a doctoral degree in Behavioral and Social Health Sciences. It is intended to supplement guidelines contained in the Brown University Graduate School Handbook.
TRAINING GOALS AND COMPETENCIES

The BSHS Doctoral program aims to train health behavior scientists to (a) understand the social and behavioral factors that influence health-related behavior across multiple levels, including individual, community, environmental, sociocultural, and policy levels; and (b) ameliorate public health problems by designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions that influence health-related behaviors. Students of BSHS aim to understand and modify health-related behaviors with the goal of improving the health of individuals and groups. Training emphasizes understanding the bases of health behavior and health behavior change from an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating perspectives from traditional behavioral sciences (e.g., psychology, psychiatry) and social sciences (e.g., sociology, anthropology, communications). Our students may use quantitative and/or qualitative methods to design, implement, analyze, and interpret health behavior research; however, training does emphasize quantitative methods. The doctoral program in BSHS incorporates experiential learning as a supplement to classroom work. Active participation in research, both student- and faculty-led, is seen as an essential component of doctoral training.

The PhD program in Behavioral and Social Health Sciences is designed to enable students to:

- Analyze and explain health behavior using component principles of behavioral and/or social science theory.
- Critically evaluate quantitative and/or qualitative research methods and draw appropriate inferences from research findings.
- Develop or refine a theory-based public health intervention with clear behavior change goal(s).
- Design a plan to evaluate the fidelity, the active ingredients/mechanisms of change, and the efficacy of a health behavior intervention.
- Appraise the state of knowledge and knowledge gaps within a substantive area of health behavior.
- Design and conduct original research on health behaviors and outcomes, using appropriate methods and analyses, and adhering to ethical research principles.
- Demonstrate advanced communication skills by authoring original research that is disseminated to the scientific community.

The doctoral degree requirements are designed to work synergistically to help students develop and demonstrate these competencies, as shown in Appendix A.
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission is open to qualified applicants from many disciplinary backgrounds. The program seeks students with strong potential for independent scholarship in Behavioral and Social Health Sciences, evidenced by excellence in relevant coursework and recommendations from those in a good position to evaluate the applicant’s capabilities to pursue graduate-level research. The most competitive applicants will have an earned a Master’s degree in Public Health or in a behavioral or social science field (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, communication), or demonstrated research experience relevant to public health.

During the 2021-2022 admissions cycle, submission of GRE scores is NOT required or expected by the BSHS Program. Only if applicants lack other evidence of quantitative, verbal, or analytic writing ability should they consider providing a GRE score. Per Graduate School policy, TOEFL scores are required for students whose native language is not English; they may be waived for those who hold a Bachelors or Master’s degree from a US institution. Language proficiency examination scores are not needed from students from a non-US university where the primary language of instruction is English. The Graduate School provides additional information for international applicants, including information on language proficiency examinations.

To be prepared to complete the quantitative requirements for the BSHS degree, a background in probability and/or calculus beyond just experience with statistics is strongly recommended. Prospective applicants without strong quantitative backgrounds will be asked to provide evidence of their preparation to engage in doctoral-level biostatistics. Some admitted students choose to do online preparation or take a refresher course prior to beginning graduate study at the Brown School of Public Health.

Students will be matched with a faculty research advisor upon admission, and therefore should identify potential specific faculty advisors in their application. Potential applicants should review the list of faculty in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS) who are able to take on the advisement of a doctoral student; advisors’ availability can change yearly. When contacting faculty whose research corresponds with their own interests, students should include a description of their research interests/training goals and a CV to help facilitate meaningful conversation and/or appropriate referral to other faculty colleagues. Admission will signify willingness of one or more faculty members to serve as primary advisor.

Students wishing to pursue a Doctoral degree in Behavioral and Social Health Sciences must apply online through the SOPHAS portal. Instructions are available on the School of Public Health’s admissions website; the deadline is December 1st for admission the following Fall.

The Brown University School of Public Health hosts a Recruitment Day in late January, when a select number of applicants to the doctoral programs are invited to visit Providence to meet with faculty and students. Attendance is by invitation only.

Written notification of acceptance is made by the Graduate School, usually in February and March.
For all PhD students, a minimum of 24 tuition units are required if matriculating into the program without a Master’s degree; 16 are required beyond a Master's. The normal residency requirement is the equivalent of three years of full-time study beyond the Bachelor’s degree.

For a full-time graduate student, a tuition unit is earned while taking a course or serving for a semester in a paid research or teaching role. Thus, doctoral students earn four tuition units for each semester that they are enrolled in at least three courses, which is considered full-time; the final tuition unit is typically earned through research work, or a teaching assignment. Students appointed as TAs or RAs typically take three courses per semester; those appointed as Fellow without a work requirement may take four courses. Most students take three or four courses per semester before starting the Dissertation.

The major requirements for the PhD in BSHS are:

1. **Coursework.** The required coursework for PhD students is described in detail under BSHS CURRICULUM. Doctoral students are expected to receive a grade of A or B in all courses that count for credit toward the BSHS degree.

2. **Research training.** Under the guidance of their research advisors, students affiliate with a research lab to learn by doing. In each year of the program, students are expected to contribute to their advisor's research team; in some years it may be in the form of a 20-hr/week funded assistantship, and during years when the assistantship comes from other sources (e.g., a TA or an RA for another faculty member), the contributions may be limited to a few hours per week. The purpose of this experience is to develop research skills relevant to the student’s program of study. This research training includes opportunities to learn to write for publication; students are expected to demonstrate this key competency in the form of a co-authored or primary authored science-based publication before they graduate.

3. **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training.** During September-October of their first semester, doctoral students complete a Responsible Conduct in Research (ethics) training program offered by the School of Public Health. This course includes lecture, discussion, and online components, and culminates in a final evaluation. For more information on RCR training, please click HERE.

4. **Doctoral Seminar in Public Health:** All doctoral students in the School of Public Health attend weekly department-specific sections of the Doctoral Seminar (also known as Journal Club) until admitted to doctoral candidacy. The content of the student-lead Seminar rotates through discussions of journal articles and presentations of student and faculty research. The Seminar incorporates the monthly i-BSHS Seminar Series, which students are required to attend. (See Appendix B for details)

5. **Teaching experience.** Doctoral students in Public Health gain teaching experience by serving in teaching roles for a minimum of two semesters. BSHS doctoral students will serve at least once as a paid Teaching Assistant (TA) assisting a faculty member to teach a large public health course, typically in their second or third year. The second teaching experience (TE) will be taken for course credit; the TE will be developed to serve the student’s professional development under the guidance of a faculty member. Appendix F contains guidelines and expectations for TEs. More

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opportunities to obtain teaching training are described HERE.

6. **Qualifying exam**: In the BSHS program, the qualifying exam allows students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts learned in core courses as well as a depth of knowledge in their chosen research area. The preparation for and structure of the qualifying exam for BSHS is described in detail under **QUALIFYING EXAM**. Doctoral students must pass the qualifying exam in order to propose a Dissertation.

7. **The Dissertation**: The training for PhD students in BSHS culminates in preparation of the Dissertation, a series of three publishable research papers that will help to launch the student’s independent research career. The process and expectations for proposing and defending dissertations are explained in detail in the following section on **THE DISSERTATION**.
MENTORING MODEL
A student will generally be admitted to work with a primary advisor determined during the admissions process based on match between student and faculty interests and availability of faculty. The primary advisor will typically provide funding for that student, and serve as instructor for Independent Studies and as Dissertation advisor. Primary advisors will usually be faculty with primary appointments in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences, but may be faculty holding a secondary appointment. Most primary advisors act as professional mentors, engaging students in scientific activities beyond the thesis, such as presenting talks at university seminars and scientific meetings, assisting with manuscript reviews, and collaborating on other research projects. In the initial meetings with the primary advisor, students will create a draft individual development plan for the first year of graduate study. The plan, which will be updated annually, should include setting target dates for completion of milestones.

Each student will also be assigned a secondary advisor; at least one of the primary or secondary advisors will be a member of the BSS core teaching faculty. The secondary advisor’s role is as an additional source of input and guidance on timely completion of program milestones, general professional development, mentorship, and academic advocacy. The secondary advisor can serve as a general resource, and will be available to help the student navigate any challenges encountered in the graduate program. Students should plan to meet with their secondary advisor at least once per semester.

The BSHS doctoral program endorses the Graduate School’s guidelines for graduate advising and mentoring. We encourage all doctoral students to consult the document titled “Getting the Most from Advisors and Mentors,” which emphasizes the value of developing an advising team; establishing regular and clear communications; and proactive engagement with your advising, department, and graduate school resources. Advisors are also encouraged to review the “Best Practices for Advising and Mentoring” on an annual basis. The Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning also offers helpful resources for effective mentoring practices.

While ensuring a good match between student and primary research advisor upon admission will be a priority, there are cases when student interests change and/or working styles are not optimally matched. Students are free to change advisors, and should consult with their primary and secondary advisors, or the Doctoral Program Director, to initiate such a change.

RESEARCH PLACEMENT
Students affiliate with a research team starting in their first year; this placement will involve apprenticeship on the primary advisor’s research team. This research placement may overlap with a funded research assistantship. The purpose of this experience is to develop research skills relevant to the student’s program of study, including learning how to conceptualize research questions and implement state-of-the-science methodologies. One expected outcome of this research placement is co-authorship on an empirical paper. It is expected that this apprenticeship will develop into a mentoring relationship that will lead to Independent Studies preparing for the qualifying exam.
The BSHS curriculum consists of 16 required courses in the categories of (a) BSHS core, (b) Statistics, (c) Methods, (d) Health Equity, and (e) BSHS Elective Courses. Two of the requirements (one Methods course and one Elective course) will be met via Independent Study. A list of approved courses in each of these categories can be found in the end of this section. The following table shows a typical course distribution across the first through fourth years. For descriptions of all courses offered in the School of Public Health click HERE.

BSHS students are expected to complete online training programs required by the School of Public Health and/or Brown University. For example, all incoming students must complete PHP 1001: Foundations of Public Health Knowledge. This free, online, non-credit, modular course provides a broad exposure to important public health content as mandated by our accrediting body, CEPH. All modules can be completed at the student’s pace and must be completed by the end of the first academic year. BSHS student are expected to acquire all necessary ethics certifications (e.g., the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative [CITI] Program) prior to participating in human subjects research. In addition, the Graduate School requires new students to complete online trainings in the Student Conduct Code and Title IX; prompts will come directly from the Graduate School.

Students pursuing a PhD in Behavioral and Social Health Sciences can use the checklist contained in Appendix C to monitor their progress through the BSHS program coursework. Students should check periodically with the Academic Administrator to confirm their records against the official program of study.

Students entering with relevant graduate coursework that was not used in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy elsewhere may request permission for courses to be counted toward fulfillment of the degree requirements. However, no more than the equivalent of one full year of study may be counted in this manner. The minimum number of courses that a student must pass after enrolling in the BSHS doctoral program is 12. Thus, if more than 4 of the 16 required courses for the BSHS degree are satisfied by transfer credits, the 12-course minimum will be satisfied by taking more elective courses consistent with the student’s program of study.

CURRICULUM PETITIONS
A student who desires credit for work done elsewhere should provide (a) the syllabus and (b) a completed Course Waiver Request Form (see Appendix D) to the Doctoral Program Director. Typically, the Program Director will share these documents with the course instructor at Brown and/or the Curriculum Committee to determine equivalency. The student may be asked to meet with the course instructor and/or to take the final exam to confirm that prior coursework is equivalent to the course at Brown. Note that PHP2361 (Proseminar in Health Behavior Intervention Research) may not be waived and must be taken at Brown.

Students may find courses offered by other graduate departments at Brown University that could fulfill BSHS requirements. After consultation with their Advisor, the student may submit a request to the BSHS Curriculum Committee for approval, using the Course Waiver Request Form (Appendix D). All requests must include a rationale for the relevance of the course to public health and to the student’s program of study and be signed by the advisor. Additional elective courses can be taken when relevant to a student’s thesis work or career goals. Students may also register for Independent Study courses under the guidance of individual
faculty members.

GRADE EXPECTATIONS
Doctoral students must receive a grade of A or B in all courses that count for credit toward the BSHS degree. Therefore, all courses taken to satisfy curriculum requirements must be taken for a letter grade. The only approved exception is the Doctoral Seminar (PHP 2950), which is taken for credit but no grade (S/NC); other exceptions may be granted rarely upon petition to the BSS Curriculum Committee. Grades of C or NC require a plan for remediation, and may adversely affect the student’s academic standing. Detailed discussion of academic standing can be found under STUDENT EVALUATIONS.

BREADTH AND DEPTH
The curriculum is designed to provide both breadth of exposure to the science of public health and depth of expertise in a student’s chosen research area. Breadth is achieved by (a) requiring exposure to the foundational public health tools of methods and statistics taught by faculty in other departments in the School of Public Health; (b) establishing a core set of BSHS courses taken by all BSHS PhD students; and (c) requiring students to select among BSHS electives designed to broaden student’s exposure to topic areas beyond their main area(s) of interest. The curriculum also provides opportunity to establish depth and focus, through (a) the two independent studies that prepare students for their qualifying exams, (b) elective coursework reflecting faculty areas of expertise, coupled with (c) active mentoring of student-driven research culminating in the three thematically-related dissertation studies.
### BSHS Doctoral Curriculum and Approved Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Semester Offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BSHS Core Courses (these or equivalents are required)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2300 Research Methods in Behavioral Science</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2340 Behavioral and Social Science Theory for Health Promotion</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2360 Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating Public Health Interventions</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2380 Health Communication</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2361 Proseminar in Health Behavior Intervention Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statistics Courses (2 required courses +1 elective from list)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2510 Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis [or equivalent]</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2511 Applied Regression Analysis [or equivalent]</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2250 Advanced Quantitative Methods in Epidemiologic Research</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2514 Applied Generalized Linear Models</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2516 Applied Longitudinal Data Analysis (1/2 credit course)</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2517 Applied Multilevel Data Analysis (1/2 credit course)</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2530 Bayesian Statistical Methods</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2550 Practical Data Analysis</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2601 Linear Models</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2602 Analysis of Lifetime Data</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2610 Causal Inference and Missing Data</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLPS 2908 Multivariate Statistical Techniques</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 2020 Multivariate Statistical Methods II</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 2240 Event History Analysis</td>
<td>SPRING - E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods Courses (3 required courses +1 elective from list)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2090 Scientific Writing in Public Health</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2120 Intro to Methods in Epidemiologic Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2150 Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2980 Graduate Independent Study in BSHS Methods</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1885 Measuring Mindfulness</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTH 2230 Medical Anthropology</td>
<td>FALL - E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2019 Measurement Issues in Health Care</td>
<td>SPRING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2030 Clinical Trials Methodology</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2040 Survey Research Methods</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2060 Qualitative Methods in Health Research</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2200 Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 2210 Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 2612 Geographic Informational Systems and Spatial Analysis for the Social Sciences</td>
<td>SPRING - E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Equity Courses (choose 1 from list)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1920 Social Determinants of Health</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1650 Race, Racism, and Health</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1680U Intersectionality and Health Inequities</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2325 Place Matters: Exploring Community-Level Contexts on Health Behaviors, Outcomes, and Disparities</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2365 Public Health Issues in LGBT Populations</td>
<td>FALL - O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2710 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Disability and Death in the Global South</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2730 Including the Excluded: Global Health and Ethics</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OR
### Behavior and Social Science Electives (1 required course + 2 electives from this list ³)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2980</td>
<td>Graduate Independent Study in a BSHS Substantive Area</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1540</td>
<td>Alcohol Use and Misuse ¹</td>
<td>FALL - O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1600</td>
<td>Obesity in the 21ˢᵗ Century: Causes, Consequences and Countermeasures ¹</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1610</td>
<td>Tobacco, Disease and the Industry: cigs, e-cigs, and more ¹</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 1890</td>
<td>The Craving Mind</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2023</td>
<td>Maternal and Child Health in the US</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2130</td>
<td>Human Biology for Public Health</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2160</td>
<td>Global Burden of Mental Illness: A Public Health Approach</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2330</td>
<td>Behavioral and Social Approaches to HIV Prevention ¹</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2345</td>
<td>Affect, Emotion, and Health Behavior</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2365</td>
<td>Public Health Issues in LGBT Populations ¹</td>
<td>FALL – O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2370*</td>
<td>Etiology of Substance Use Disorders ²</td>
<td>FALL - O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2371*</td>
<td>Psychosocial and Pharmacologic Treatment of Substance Abuse ²</td>
<td>FALL - E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2023</td>
<td>Maternal and Child Health in the US</td>
<td>FALL - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2130</td>
<td>Human Biology for Public Health</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2160</td>
<td>Global Burden of Mental Illness: A Public Health Approach</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2330</td>
<td>Behavioral and Social Approaches to HIV Prevention ¹</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHP 2345</td>
<td>Affect, Emotion, and Health Behavior</td>
<td>SPRING - Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2365</td>
<td>Public Health Issues in LGBT Populations ¹</td>
<td>FALL – O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2370*</td>
<td>Etiology of Substance Use Disorders ²</td>
<td>FALL - O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHP 2371*</td>
<td>Psychosocial and Pharmacologic Treatment of Substance Abuse ²</td>
<td>FALL - E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RCR Training

- RCR: Responsible Conduct in Research training sequence (and CITI cert)

**FALL - Y**

### Online Training

- PHP 1001: Foundations of Public Health Knowledge

**BOTH - Y**

### Doctoral Seminar

- PHP2950: Weekly Doctoral Seminar (Journal Club) + i-BSHS Lecture Series

**BOTH - Y**

### Teaching Requirements

- TA-ship: Teaching Assistantship (TA) 20 hours/week
- PHP 2988: Teaching Experience (TE) 10 hours/week

**EITHER - Y**

### Dissertation Credit

- PHP 2990: Thesis Preparation

**BOTH - Y**

**NOTES.** Y = offered every year; E = offered in even years; O = offered in odd years. A course may appear in two sections but can fulfill a requirement in only one category.

¹ Designates a course that integrates behavioral and social perspectives.

² These courses also assume students have had prior work in clinical research or addictions. They may conflict with Journal Club, so students taking it would need to have passed their Qualifying Exam in order to register.

³ In lieu of one of these electives, students may substitute an additional course from the Methods, Statistics, or Equity clusters, upon approval from the BSS Curriculum Committee.
### SAMPLE COURSE MAP FOR BSHS STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>• PHP 2510: Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis</td>
<td>• PHP 2511: Applied Regression Analysis</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PHP 2300: Research Methods in Behavioral Science</td>
<td>• PHP 2360: Developing + Testing Theory-Driven, Evidence Based Psychosocial and Behavioral Health Interventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PHP 2340: Behavioral and Social Science Theory for Health Promotion</td>
<td>• PHP 2380: Health Communication</td>
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<td>• PHP 2980: Independent study I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>• PHP 2150: Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods</td>
<td>• Health equity course*</td>
<td>Dissertation proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PHP 2090: Scientific Writing for Public Health</td>
<td>• BSS elective course*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• PHP 2980: Independent study II</td>
<td>• Advanced statistics course*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>• PHP 2361: Advanced Proseminar in Health Behavioral Intervention Research</td>
<td>• Advanced methods course*</td>
<td>Dissertation research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• BSS elective course*</td>
<td>• PHP 2950: Doctoral Seminar in Public Health (Journal Club) *</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• PHP 2988: Teaching Experience*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>• PHP 2990: Dissertation research</td>
<td>• PHP 2990: Dissertation research</td>
<td>Dissertation research</td>
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<td>Year 5</td>
<td>• PHP 2990: Dissertation research</td>
<td>• PHP 2990: Dissertation research</td>
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</table>

**NOTES:**
Courses in *italics* must be completed before sitting for qualifying exam.
Courses marked with asterisks (*) may be taken in either the Fall or Spring semesters.
QUALIFYING EXAM

Preparation for the qualifying exam takes place during Years 1 and 2 (or Years 2 and 3 if student has not already completed a relevant Master’s degree). Students planning to sit for the exams must complete all Core BSHS Courses (or their equivalents) – with the exception of the Proseminar – and two Independent Studies.

The BSHS Independent Studies establish a student’s substantive focus by in-depth reading about a health behavior or problem. During the Spring of the first year, students and mentors will jointly identify a suitable topic for a focused substantive review and develop an associated reading list; final products will include a final course paper (a literature review or empirical paper) and a set of 4-5 questions reflecting key questions/unresolved issues in the field. In the Fall of the second year, students and mentors will identify key methodological challenges and innovations in studying this topic and develop an associated reading list; again, final products will include a final course paper and set of 4-5 key questions. The literature, papers, and questions will serve as the basis for the individualized portion of the qualifying exam. Suggested guidelines for the structure of BSHS Independent Studies appear in Appendix E.

Students typically select either their primary or secondary advisor to serve as instructor. Sometimes it is appropriate to select an instructor from among the other faculty within or outside of the BSS department. Given the importance of rigor in these courses that prepare them for the Qualifying Exam and eventually the Dissertation, students must obtain approval from the Doctoral Program Director before taking an independent study with a non-primary BSS faculty instructor.

Qualifying exams will consist of two components, completed in January of the second year (or the third year for students who do not already have a Master’s degree). Both components will be completed before the start of Spring semester classes; the sit-down exam will typically be scheduled during the second week of January and the take home exam will typically occur in the third week of January.

SIT-DOWN WRITTEN EXAM
This monitored in-class exam is designed to assess breadth of knowledge about core topics from the BSHS curriculum. The BSS faculty teaching core courses (Theory, Methods, Intervention Design, and Health Communication) will generate a pool of essay questions that address broad and consequential themes related to course content. Four pairs of items will be selected each year, and students select one from each pair to answer; up to 4 hours is allotted for this exam. These essays will be graded by two faculty members, one of which is the course instructor, blind to the writer’s identity.

TAKE-HOME WRITTEN EXAM
The student will respond to 4 questions related to their substantive area of research, selected from the question lists generated from the preparatory Independent Studies. The student has one week to answer the questions; responses (double-spaced, referenced) in the form of a Word document will be submitted to the Doctoral Program Director by a designated date and time. Each response should approximate 5 double-spaced pages of text, with references. Essays will be graded by 2-3 BSS faculty designated by the Doctoral Program Director.
EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES
Each essay is rated as pass, conditional pass, or fail; inconsistencies across raters are resolved by consensus. Accuracy and completeness of content as well as effectiveness of communication are considered. Students must pass all of the questions to earn a full pass on the exam. Students who receive a conditional pass on any of the questions will receive feedback and will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit the essay(s) by April 30th. Students revising qualifying exam essays should engage in relevant reading and/or study and may consult with program faculty as part of this preparation. Revised essays should answer the question succinctly and thus should not be substantially longer than the original. Failure of any of the questions will require an individualized remediation plan developed in coordination with the student's advisors. If 5 or more questions receive failure grades, or if revised essays do not achieve a full pass, the student may be required to retake all or part of the exam in a supervised format before the end of the June. Students must earn a full pass on the Qualifying Exam before proposing their Dissertation.
THE DISSERTATION

BSHS dissertations consist of three distinct, thematically-linked, publishable quality papers targeted to specific journal(s). The formulation of the hypotheses and/or thesis must be original. At least two of the papers should be data-focused (including qualitative research, meta-analysis, and/or secondary data analysis); of these, at least one of the papers must involve quantitative data analysis, and at least one of the papers must involve new data collection (typically requiring IRB review). One of the papers may be a systematic review or a theoretical paper that offers a novel contribution to the literature.

SELECTING A DISSERTATION ADVISOR AND MENTORING TEAM

Students enrolled in the PhD program must pass their qualifying examinations prior to selecting a Dissertation advisor and committee. Any member of the Behavioral and Social Sciences faculty may potentially serve as a dissertation advisor. A student’s primary research advisor will most likely continue on as dissertation advisor, providing ongoing supervision and consultation for the conceptualization, methods, conduct, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

Students should discuss selection of committee members with their advisor. A doctoral committee consists of a minimum of three Brown University faculty members. A fourth member from inside or outside of the University may be added to have a balance of expertise representing substantive and methodological aspects of the dissertation plan. Although interactions with committee members vary considerably, the committee may be asked to provide feedback at regular intervals during the preparation of the dissertation. Toward this end, interim committee meetings may be scheduled once per semester at the discretion of the student and dissertation advisor.

The dissertation committee may be assembled and approved at any time after the student passes their qualifying examination, and the final composition of the committee must be approved by the Doctoral Program Director. A signed Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form (Appendix H) should be filed with the Department Manager, before a student schedules a dissertation proposal meeting.

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE

The Dissertation Proposal Defense consists of two parts: The written proposal (the proposal document), and the oral proposal defense.

Proposal Document Doctoral students will create a written proposal describing their planned Dissertation research and present the proposal to their Dissertation committee. Proposals should be distributed to the committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled Dissertation Proposal Defense meeting. Because a BSHS dissertation will typically be structured in 5 chapters, the proposal should follow the same format, presenting Chapters 1-4 in proposal form. The proposal should include the following components (pages are only rough guidelines):

i. Abstract or summary of the proposal that includes the specific aims of the work to be done (1-2 pages).

ii. An introductory Chapter 1 that provides a literature review to frame your research questions (5-7 pages): This sets the context for your research, describes the previous work done in the field that leads up to the scientific problems you are addressing, and identifies questions about or indicates gaps in existing work that your dissertation research will address. This may include preliminary studies describing what work the
student has done, if any, that supports the proposed project.

iii. Chapters 2-4 (~5-10 pages each): These chapters outline the three thesis papers. For each, lay out the aims and significance, methods, analytic plan, and potential implications of the findings for each paper. If you are using different datasets or methodologies, these may be 3 distinct sections. If a single methodology will produce 2-3 distinct papers, then the common methods do not need to be repeated in full, but each should have distinct (if brief) rationale, hypotheses, and analytic plan (for quantitative papers). Each of these Chapters, when completed, should be able to stand alone as a separate paper submission.

iv. Include proposed measures or protocols as appendices if relevant for evaluating the scientific rigor of the research

One or more of the proposed studies may have been described in an F31, R36, or other dissertation grant application. Funded or unfunded, the application may serve as the foundation for the dissertation proposal. However, to show how the proposed research meets the requirement of 3 distinct and publishable papers, the proposal should be rewritten in chapter format.

Proposal Defense To schedule the proposal defense meeting, students submit a Dissertation Proposal Date Request Form (Appendix I) to the BSHS Department Manager, and work with the Department Manager to find a date and time and place convenient for all parties. The student should complete the student portion of the Dissertation Proposal Defense Results Form (Appendix J) and provide to the dissertation advisor prior to the proposal defense date. Three Brown faculty members must be present to participate in the defense.

The goal of the proposal defense is to determine how well the student can define important scientific questions and devise creative and innovative approaches to answer them. Thus, this meeting provides a forum for presenting and defending the rationale and design of the Dissertation. The proposal defense will be attended by the dissertation committee and chaired by a committee member other than the dissertation advisor. Students should prepare an overview of the proposed studies (approximately 30 minutes), using slides as necessary. Students should be sure to practice the presentation beforehand. Assume that the committee has read the proposal, and try to focus on the research plan and its importance, rather than providing an extensive review of background material. Committee members will then direct questions to the candidate. The role of external committee members is advisory; if unable to attend the defense, the outside member may submit questions to the chair, who will pose them to the student. The questioning process can take up to 90 minutes. Revisions may be required before the proposal receives final approval. Feedback generated during the proposal defense can be very helpful for ensuring a rigorous dissertation project.

Proposal Evaluation and Outcome The written proposal and the oral proposal defense will be evaluated for their content, plan, presentation, and response to questions. The evaluation result options are: pass, pass with minor revisions, conditional pass, and no pass. A “pass with minor revisions” should be given when revisions to the document are deemed to be relatively minor and most committee members are content to allow the advisor to supervise the revisions. In this case, the committee members except the advisor may choose to sign the Dissertation Proposal Defense Results Form (Appendix J). Those earning “pass with minor revisions” should incorporate committee feedback and submit the revised document to their advisor (and any other committee members who wish to see the revisions) for approval and signature in a timely fashion. Those earning “conditional pass” may either be asked to re-defend the proposal or to
address significant deficiencies in the proposal. In this case, signatures are withheld and all committee members must agree that any shortcomings have been adequately addressed before the student is admitted to candidacy. A “no pass” means the student may be directed to repeat the proposal defense altogether, or may be declined candidacy to the PhD degree. The chair of the proposal defense will summarize the discussion and the outcome, including conditions if they are established, on the Dissertation Proposal Defense Results Form (Appendix J), and email copies to the Doctoral Program Director, Department Manager, and the student.

A student becomes a doctoral candidate when the dissertation proposal is approved by all committee members. Upon becoming a candidate, the student should plan to meet with the dissertation committee at least twice a year to review progress. Committee members should be consulted if considering major changes in approach.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE
Students should work closely with their advisors and committee members to determine when the dissertation is ready to defend. Agreement by all committee members to schedule the thesis defense is a strong predictor of approval of the doctoral thesis. However, the outcome of the thesis defense is dependent upon (a) the quality of the document, (b) the student’s oral presentation, and (c) responses to questions from both the public and the dissertation committee.

Students should follow the Graduate School guidelines for preparing and presenting the PhD dissertation. Several weeks in advance of the defense, the student should complete a Dissertation Defense Information form and submit the completed form to the department manager and schedule a meeting to confirm all other items needed for the process; this form alerts the Graduate School of your intention and readiness to defend. The department manager will work with the student to arrange a date and location for the public presentation and oral defense of the thesis.

A BSHS dissertation will typically be structured in 5 chapters: an introductory chapter that provides common background and frames the research questions, Study 1, Study 2, Study 3, and a discussion/conclusion chapter that integrates the findings of the 3 dissertation studies. The structure of the middle three chapters may closely follow the format of individual journal articles. Ideally, the structure across chapters (referencing, placement of tables) should be consistent, but specific formatting decisions should be made in consultation with the advisor.

It is recommended that the advisor review a complete draft of the dissertation prior to its distribution to committee members, to ensure that the document is ready to defend. Committee members should receive the penultimate draft of the thesis at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled defense to allow for careful reading and preparation of questions. The advisor and committee should decide whether or not questions are provided to the student in advance.

The defense meeting is chaired by a member of the BSS faculty, and is open to the public. The defense begins with an oral presentation of approximately 45 minutes. After the oral presentation, the public is invited to ask questions of the candidate; at the end of the public question period the committee members and candidate move to another room to continue the examination. Committee members will then direct questions to the candidate; this examination may take up to 90 minutes. At the conclusion of the examination, the dissertation committee will meet in private to make a final determination of the acceptability of the dissertation and discuss
any changes recommended to the final version. Outcomes consist of (a) pass with distinction, (b) pass, (c) pass with minor revisions, (d) pass conditional on major revisions, and (e) no pass. If the dissertation receives a pass with distinction or pass, all the committee members will sign the required 3 copies of the signature page on the defense date. “Pass with minor revisions” is to be given when revisions are deemed to be relatively minor and most committee members are content to allow the chair to review the revisions. Those earning “pass with minor revisions” should revise the document consistent with committee feedback and submit the revisions to their advisor (as well as other committee members who ask to see the revisions) for approval. Committee members may sign the signature page but the advisor will withhold a signature until the revised document has been approved. “Pass conditional on major revisions” indicates that substantial revisions to the final document are needed and must be completed and approved by all committee members before the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School. In this case, all committee members withhold their signatures until the revised document is approved by all.

SUBMISSION OF COMPLETED DISSERTATION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Do follow the Graduate School instructions designed to help graduate students with the preparation and presentation of the dissertation.

An electronic copy of the final dissertation should be submitted to the Department Manager, for Department files. Students should consult with their advisors to determine advisor preferences for receiving a final copy of the document.

Graduate degrees are conferred on three dates over the course of the year: October (for those completing in the summer), February (for those completing in the fall), and May (for those completing in the spring). The University Graduate School requires all PhD dissertations to be submitted to the Graduate School in its final, signed form by May 1 in order to participate in Spring commencement exercises. October and February degree recipients may participate in the subsequent May commencement ceremony. Check the graduate school’s website for important deadlines pertinent to these latter two conferral dates.
The following table provides a typical timeline for completing degree requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Expected completion by the end of:</th>
<th>To remain in good standing complete by the end of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish CITI certification</td>
<td>Orientation week</td>
<td>Semester 1&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCR Training</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>Semester 3&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete required coursework</td>
<td>Semester 6</td>
<td>Semester 8&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying exam: written exam</td>
<td>Jan 31 in Semester 4</td>
<td>Jan 31 in Semester 6&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying exam: sit down exam</td>
<td>Jan 31 in Semester 4</td>
<td>Jan 31 in Semester 6&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation proposal</td>
<td>Semester 5</td>
<td>Semester 7&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation defense</td>
<td>Semester 8</td>
<td>Semester 10&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup>These target dates are established by the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences. Failure to meet these expected completion dates may affect academic standing.

<sup>2</sup>According to Graduate School policy, students have up to 5 years after admission into the program to achieve candidacy. Similarly, it is University policy that the Dissertation should be completed within 5 years of admission to candidacy (approval of Dissertation proposal). The timeline presented here represents departmental expectations. Additional time may be granted upon petition to the faculty. If BSHS Doctoral students do not complete a Dissertation by the end of Semester 10, they may not be eligible for departmental funding.
STUDENT EVALUATIONS

PROGRESS AND FEEDBACK
Graduate students benefit from reflecting on their career aspirations, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and formulating a plan to better prepare themselves to optimize their graduate training and preparation for the job market. Individual Development Plans (IDPs) provide a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives. Furthermore, IDPs serve as a communication tool between graduate students and their advisors.

An IDP worksheet has been developed (see Appendix K) to serve as an organizational tool and to structure conversations between students and advisors. In the first semester in the BSHS program, an initial IDP should be prepared in collaboration with the research advisor to establish short-term and longer-term goals (Sections 2 and 3). Then, updates will be done annually at the end of the academic year as part of the annual review.

While the student is enrolled in the program, the graduate training faculty will review first-year student progress mid-year and all students in June for a formal annual review. Prior to the annual review, input will be solicited from instructors, RA or TA supervisors, as well as primary and secondary advisors. In preparation for this annual review, students should update their Graduate School Digital CV, summarizing past-year achievements, and submit an updated Checklist (Appendix C) to the Department Manager.

The results of the annual review are communicated to students in a letter from the Doctoral Program Director. Thus, students will receive written feedback about their progress toward program milestones and academic standing at least yearly, and they will be notified in writing when their standing changes.

Upon receiving their annual review letter, students should meet with their primary advisors to discuss their progress in more detail and to revise their IDP to reflect goals for the next year. These collaborative conversations might include planned coursework, development of research skills, progress towards thesis completion, goals for publications or presentations, and/or grant writing. Updated IDPs should be filed with the BSHS Department Manager. IDPs can be found HERE. Note that the data gathered from IDPs will be used to track the achievement of BSHS competencies and evaluate the BSHS program.

ACADEMIC STANDING
Students’ academic standing can be classified in four ways: good, satisfactory, warning, or termination.

Students who are in good standing are making both good and timely academic progress. To remain in good academic standing, doctoral students are expected to progress through the milestones leading to Doctoral candidacy according to the PhD Milestones Guide and pass all courses with grades of “A” or “B;” no more than one incomplete can be carried on a student record in good standing. All (and only) courses taken at Brown while enrolled in the BSHS Doctoral program are included in the assessment of academic standing.

Satisfactory standing indicates that a student has encountered difficulties of some kind—inadequate performance or slow progress in coursework, research, writing, etc. Since TA or RA assignments form part of a student’s professional training, performance in those areas can also
affect academic standing. Two or more incompletes will, at minimum, result in a shift from good to satisfactory standing. Similarly, a grade of “C” is considered sub-standard work and must be remediated. This status level has no immediate impact on funding. If the concerns impacting a student’s status are not resolved within the established timeframe, the student will move on to warning status.

**Warning status** signals chronic or severe problems that must be remediated during a probationary period. For example, two or more grades of “C” in one year or persistent unresolved incomplete grades may trigger a warning. Students on probationary status (warning) will be given a written notice of their program-related deficiencies and the consequences of those deficiencies. Students will also receive clear, written instructions of the steps to be taken (if possible) to regain good or satisfactory standing, and date-specific deadlines (typically one semester) for recovery. Such notice will come at the end of every semester that a student is on warning status. Failure to satisfy the conditions of probation will result in a recommendation to the Graduate School for termination. Students will typically continue to receive funding in a probationary state during the specified time period. Warning can lead to an immediate removal of funding depending on the severity of the problem, but this occurs only in rare circumstances and only with the express approval of the Dean of the Graduate School.

If the deficiencies are not resolved by the specified deadline/s, the student on warning moves to termination status, signaling severe and irrevocable problems. Termination indicates an immediate removal of matriculation/enrollment status, as well as all forms of financial support.
All students admitted to doctoral programs receive Brown University’s commitment to funding in the form of a fellowship, research assistantship (RA) or teaching assistantship (TA). The funding package for doctoral students also includes tuition, health insurance and fees, in addition to a monthly stipend.

During the academic year, students enrolled in the BSHS PhD program are expected to be engaged on a full-time basis in educational and training activities that are relevant to the student’s personal, professional, and educational objectives. Stipended assistantships should involve no more than 20 hours/week of work to ensure that students can make adequate progress in their academic program.

Funding is contingent upon faculty determination of satisfactory student progress through the academic program. Four years of financial support is the norm for those entering with a relevant Master’s degree, and five years for those entering without such a background, as described in the Graduate School Handbook. Financial support beyond the promised 5 years is contingent upon students making satisfactory academic progress in their program of study, and availability of funds. Those students who require additional time beyond the 5-year standard must initiate a discussion on the availability of funding with the Doctoral Program Director and their advisors.

Students will be supported in their efforts to develop proposals to fund their own research through various external funding mechanisms. These include from NIH sources such as the pre-doctoral NRSA (F31), the Dissertation Research Grant (R36), or Diversity Supplements to ongoing NIH grants awarded to faculty. BSHS students have also obtained stipend and research support through other external funding sources such as the Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Scholarship program and the American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellowship. Information about sources of external awards that graduate students are eligible to apply for is provided by the Graduate School and the Biomed Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Serving as a Research Assistant (RA) is an integral part of most students’ training programs. The RAship provides a means of financial support, experience with academic research in a relevant field, and provides faculty investigators with support in the form of graduate student participation on their projects. In the event that a student’s primary or secondary advisors do not have RA support to offer, the student may obtain an RAship with another BSS faculty member.

The RA supervisor is responsible for structuring and supervising the student’s work during the term of the appointment. Frequently, the faculty member providing the financial support for the RA position will also be serving as the RA supervisor, but another faculty member can be designated. The RA supervisor is responsible for coordinating, scheduling, and keeping appropriate documentation on the RA’s activity; this is a particularly important function on large projects where the RA may be working with several different faculty and staff members. The RA supervisor will be solicited for formal feedback as part of the annual evaluation of students.

The student is responsible for working on the assigned project for up to 20 hours per week. It is understood that this may sometimes fluctuate during different points in the year, such as when
project demands are higher or when students are in an exam period. The supervisor and student must communicate clearly in order to ensure that both academic and RA responsibilities are being met.

Publications and Academic Freedom
An RA’s role in generating manuscripts for publication may vary by individual setting. It must be recognized that, consistent with academic norms, those who contribute intellectual content must be given appropriate credit. Being a paid RA is not grounds to preclude authorship, nor does it guarantee authorship. RAs who make author-level contributions to a research project should be offered the opportunity to participate as a coauthor in publications, even if the RAship has been completed at the time the manuscript is being prepared. RAs should notify and work with the RA supervisor directly should they wish to initiate preparation of a manuscript for publication based on a project or data associated with the RAship.

SUMMER SUPPORT
Sources of Support
During the summer, students may continue to be supported on the RAship started in the academic year, or transfer to another RA, program fellowship, or training grant. Research Assistantships are paid for by specific grants held by faculty members, so work as an RA is structured according to the needs and aims of the grant. Grant-funded RAs provide students with important skill-building experience and exposure to various projects and teams. Students funded on departmental fellowships or training grants are matched to a faculty member for the summer, providing an opportunity to work individually with the faculty on a specific research project, gaining research skills and experience. The assignment process is coordinated by the Doctoral Program Director.

Summer Activities
In exchange for a their monthly stipend, BSHS students generally work approximately 20 hours per week on a specific research project that corresponds to the source of support. The balance of the full-time activities is expected to contribute to the student’s educational and professional development; these may include additional time spent on other research projects, training activities such as preparing a grant application, participating in summer classes/trainings, individual reading, and/or collaborative writing.

Summer Work Schedule
Summer research appointments are made during the three-month period from June 1 through August 31. The student, primary advisor, and summer research supervisor should work jointly to formulate a work schedule and set of activities designed to meet both the needs of the funding source and the student’s educational objectives. Students wishing to take vacation should discuss their plans in advance, consistent with the Time Off Policy for Supported Students (next page).

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS
At least one semester of TA experience is required of all doctoral students in the School of Public Health. A Teaching Assistantship is a full 20-hour per week experience, and usually involves supporting a faculty member in teaching a large undergraduate or Master’s-level course. Responsibilities may include grading, running study sections or labs, holding office hours, and/or presenting occasional lectures. The School adheres to a policy of a 1:50 maximum TA-to-student ratio with regard to responsibility for leading a section or lab and/or hand-grading of assignments/exams/papers. Thus, regardless of the total size of the class, a TA will not be responsible for more than 50 students. This ratio does not apply to situations where
tests/quizzes are auto-graded or to other TA duties such as assisting with the Canvas course site.

BSHS students will be assigned primarily to courses taught by BSS faculty and then secondarily to support other courses within the School; every effort is made to align students’ TA assignments with their academic interests and skill sets. Additional semesters may be assigned if students do not alternative sources of funding. The TA semester is usually covered by Program funds, and carries full stipend, tuition, and other fees.

Students who are supported by research fellowships or other training awards may not be required to TA if the TA commitment would interfere with their training plan. A student on fellowship or training grant has the option of doing a second TE, if consistent with the student’s training goals.

Students should complete the New Teaching Assistants Orientation conducted by the Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning prior to the start of the Teaching Assistantship. More information HERE.

Note that students whose native language is not English must be evaluated and certified for English proficiency before serving as a TA. English language assessments are done by appointment only at the Center for Language Studies. Click HERE for more information.

TIME OFF POLICY FOR SUPPORTED STUDENTS
Over the course of the calendar year, vacation policy for students is similar to that for University staff. Specifically:

- **University holidays** for staff employees (e.g. Memorial Day, Independence Day, Winter Break) will be observed

- Recess periods on the academic calendar (e.g. spring recess, winter recess) are not observed as holiday periods for RA, TA, or Trainee duties. All students are expected to be available to work with their faculty mentor or other designated faculty supervisor during Academic Recess Periods.

- RAs and Trainees will have four weeks of vacation in addition to the annual week-long University closure that typically occurs in late December/early January. To avoid extended periods of time away, students may elect to take two weeks during the academic year and up to two weeks in summer. Requests for vacation time should be made with ample advance notice; approval of the timing is at the supervisor’s discretion contingent upon the needs of the project.

Arrangements for vacation and personal time should be handled with direct communication between the RA or TA supervisor and the student; conflicts or concerns should be communicated to the Doctoral Program Director for resolution. RA and TA supervisors are expected to make reasonable allowances for personal days and for workload during exam periods.
Teaching is an integral part of the doctoral student experience at Brown, and doctoral students are expected to teach as part of their professional and scholarly training. Not only is teaching experience essential for academic careers, but some teaching proficiency is useful for other career paths pursued by PhDs in public health that may involve leadership and supervisory roles. Consistent with this value, all doctoral students in the SPH are expected to serve a minimum of one semester as a TA and complete one semester of individualized Teaching Experience (described in Appendix F).

Students who are interested in obtaining additional teaching experiences beyond the minimum should discuss their interests with their advisor and consider documenting this as a goal on their IDP. Opportunities include:

- **A student may be asked to TA for more than one semester, to fill teaching needs in the SPH or when there are no other sources for stipend support. Students who are interested in serving as a TA for a specific course in the SPH should alert the instructor and the Doctoral Program Director, who is responsible for TA assignments. Student interest in gaining additional TA experience will be supported, contingent upon the availability of program funds to support additional TAs.**

- **Summer teaching opportunities.** Graduate students, post-docs, and faculty can propose courses for Brown’s Pre-College Program or Summer Session. Summer@Brown pre-college courses are designed and taught at a first-year college level, and may be from 1-4 weeks long. Summer Session courses fit into a seven-week session in the summer, and are geared towards Brown undergraduates. Graduate students may propose courses, with approval of their Director of Graduate Study.

- **Sheridan Center Teaching Certificates.** The Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown provides guidance and resources for teaching and creating inclusive learning environments. The Sheridan Center offers talks and workshops throughout the year designed to help graduate students and faculty improve their teaching. Topics include orientation for new teachers, developing syllabi, grading and evaluation, teaching as persuasive communication, and creating teaching statements and portfolios. Interested students can participate in Teaching Certificate programs to develop skills and strategies for becoming more reflective and effective teachers.

- **Curriculum Committee Student Representative.** Students interested in gaining an insider view of the process of department- and school-level curriculum development and refinement may serve as student rep to either the BSS or SPH Curriculum Committee. These groups meet monthly throughout the academic year and vet new course proposals, changes to degree requirements, and updates to academic policies.

- **Brown/Wheaton Faculty Fellows Program.** This collaboration between Brown Graduate School and Wheaton College provides doctoral candidates a semester-long teaching experience. Fellows gain first-hand understanding of the responsibilities and challenges of academic life at a small, four-year liberal arts college. Graduate students work with a faculty mentor at Wheaton and are responsible for all aspects of teaching a course. More information can be found here.
STUDENT QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

As a department we strive to establish a respectful and nurturing environment within which students can grow and learn and develop into public health scholars. Toward that end, we acknowledge the value of open communication and feedback among students, faculty, and staff in BSS. Within our department, several mechanisms exist for raising and addressing student concerns, inclusive of issues related to training (e.g., mentoring, teaching) and the climate in our community. Students are encouraged to ask questions and raise concerns locally first. However, students should also be aware that our university has a range of resources designed to provide support to graduate students as they navigate situations that come up as they live and learn here at Brown.

AVENUES FOR COMMUNICATION AT THE DEPARTMENT LEVEL INCLUDE:

- The Doctoral Program Director maintains an open door policy for program-related questions and issues related to program requirements, mentoring, professional development, or challenges encountered during graduate study.
- Students are encouraged to address questions and raise concerns to individual advisors, the Chair, the program administrator, or any trusted faculty member; these will be raised to the department level and beyond as appropriate.
- BSHS leadership holds meetings with students once a semester to promote two-way communication on topics of importance to the BSHS community.
- The Doctoral Program Director conducts exit interviews with graduating students, and provides anonymous aggregate feedback to faculty and students.

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION OPTIONS INCLUDE:

- The SPH Office of Diversity and Inclusion invites students to report concerns regarding climate. Students are also encouraged to use the online Suggestion Box.
- The Brown Ombuds Office is available to graduate students for guidance with any kind of workplace or academic conflict or concern, including help with resolution of conflict, having difficult conversations, or navigating ethical concerns. Conversations with the Ombudsperson are designed to be independent, confidential, neutral, and informal.
- The Brown Graduate School conducts an annual climate survey in the spring about training, mentoring and support. Departments get feedback in the fall as long as they hit a cut-off of a certain number of responses, and ours has generally had high participation.
- OIED maintains a website for bias incident reporting, and everyone should familiarize yourself with their helpful FAQ.
SPH RESOURCES FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

POSTAL AND EMAIL ADDRESSES
All graduate students in the School of Public Health will receive their postal mail and hard-copy communications at 121 South Main Street, 3rd floor. Students must check their boxes regularly, particularly for official correspondence from the University and the Department. Your mailing address (unless otherwise stated) on campus is:
Brown University
School of Public Health
Box G-S121-3
Providence, RI 02912

All students at Brown are assigned a network ID for receiving email and for accessing the University network. In the registration materials you received, you have been given a student ID number (beginning with SIS). Use the SIS number to activate your network ID through this link. All electronic communications from the Department and the Graduate School, including important information regarding billing matters, will be sent to students’ Brown University email address.

WORK SPACE
Students receive an individual desk and phone line, if space allows. Typically, BSHS students are grouped in one of the various cubical spaces in the building according to cohort/entry year. Student mailboxes, as well as printer and internet access, are available in these areas. Wireless Internet is accessible throughout the building using the Brown Secured network.

STORAGE SPACE
Student lockers are located in the 2nd & 3rd floor of 121 S. Main Street (adjacent to the graduate student workspaces and lounge) and are assigned on a first-come first-served basis. Locker use requires a small, refundable security deposit that is contingent upon proper observation of departmental policies.

LAPTOP COMPUTERS
The School of Public Health provides each incoming Doctoral student with their own new laptop computer for use while enrolled in the Doctoral program. The laptop will be set up and maintained by the Public Health IT Systems Administrator. While the program will fund the initial laptop purchase, each student will be responsible for any needed repairs, replacement parts, upgrades, etc. that are not covered by the warranty. As different components of the laptop are subject to different warranty periods, students should always check with the Public Health IT Systems Administrator for any possible component warranty before making a purchase or requesting repair. Graduate programs and/or RA supervisors may elect to assist students with needed repair costs, but that is determined individually by each program/RA supervisor. The School will provide a temporary “loaner” machine for a student’s use in the event that his/her laptop must be sent out for repair (regardless of the funding source for the repair). Laptops are the property of Brown University; therefore, when a student graduates or leaves the program for any reason, the laptop must be returned to the School of Public Health. The University maintains licenses for multiple statistical and analytic programs, which you can browse and download for free via the software catalog.

DEPARTMENT-SPONSORED LECTURES AND TALKS
The Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences sponsors a monthly Innovations in
Behavioral and Social Health Sciences (i-BSHS) lecture series. i-BSHS lectures are designed to foster collaborative discussion and promote innovative behavioral and social science-based approaches to improve population health. i-BSHS lectures address four broad themes—Health Disparities, Community Engagement, Technology, and Intervention Development. BSHS graduate students are expected to attend these events, which occur 2-3 times per semester, and they are encouraged to take advantage of the many other ongoing lectures and seminar series sponsored by the Departments and Centers within the School of Public Health.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP ON DEPARTMENTAL AND SCHOOL COMMITTEES
BSHS students are encouraged to participate in School of Public Health governance in several ways. Student representatives from each program participate in the Doctoral Studies Committee, and on the student-run Graduate Student Council. The Public Health Curriculum Committee has a student representative, which rotates among PhD programs. BSHS students also contribute to the department by serving on the BSS Curriculum and Speaker Selection Committees and as Student Ambassadors.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL (SPH-GSC)
Public health graduate students participating in the SPH-GSC serve an advisory and coordinator role to represent the general student body, providing a forum for students to express issues and concerns, advocating for student interests in collaboration with graduate student representatives serving on standing SPH committees, planning programs for academic and professional development, and organizing social events to promote a sense of community. The SPH-GSC selects representatives to serve on the Brown University Graduate Student Council. Membership provides graduate students the opportunity to take on leadership roles and influence the graduate student experience within our School.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Within the School of Public Health, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion promotes diversity, inclusion, and equity through institutional policies and resources serving the faculty, staff, and students in the School. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion supports and hosts a multitude of programming initiatives and training events. Additional resources for SPH students can be found HERE.

A number of academic and research centers, groups and organizations within the Brown University community support students from historically underrepresented groups (HUGs) and offer educational and social programs that promote equity and inclusion. Many of these organizations hold events and trainings and disseminate newsletters to apprise interested community members of their activities; links are provided below.

- Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS)
- Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America (CSREA)
- Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice (CSSJ)
- Graduate Students of Color Community
- L.E.A.D. (Learning & Engaging Around Diversity) Reading Group
- LGBTQ CENTER
- Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative (NAISAB)
- oSTEM
- Public Health Womxn of Color Collective
- Undocumented, First-Generation College, and Low-Income Student Center (U-Fli)
- Sarah Doyle Center for Women and Gender
- SPH Students of Color Affinity Group
NORA KAHN PIORE AWARD
These awards are made annually to support public health students to conduct research in health services, with a focus on health status and access to health care by poor and underserved populations. Calls for proposals are issued annually, and awards of up to $5000 can be used for research, travel, and non-stipend costs.

DISSERTATION RESEARCH GRANT
PhD students in BSHS may apply for a one-time Dissertation Research Grant of up to $2500, jointly funded by the BSHS program, BSS department, and the SPH. These small grants are designed to help doctoral students to facilitate original human subjects research or to expand their skill sets through training not provided by Brown or the SPH. Dissertation grants may be used for (a) participant payments, (b) training in specific data analysis techniques essential for the dissertation research or purchase and use of statistical packages, otherwise not available at Brown, (c) transcription or translation services, or (d) other research-related expenses associated with an approved dissertation study for which there are no other available sources of support (such as advisor’s research funds). BSHS Dissertation Research Grants should not be used primarily for travel since there are other sources of travel funds through the Graduate School. See Appendix G for eligibility and application information.
OTHER STUDENT RESOURCES

TRAVEL FUNDS
PhD students may apply to the Graduate School for up to $650 to cover expenses related to presentation at academic conferences. Funds are awarded competitively and may be requested annually provided that the student is presenting his/her work at a conference. Application and instructions are available through the Graduate School Conference Travel website.

The Graduate Student Council provides conference funding to students who are ineligible for financial support from the Graduate School.

The Graduate School also awards funds for competitive proposals to travel both domestically and internationally to pursue research, collaboration, and training. Consult here for information on research travel grants.

Doctoral students who present original work at academic conferences can also request support from the School of Public Health. The School of Public Health provides a one-time award of up to $400 to cover related travel expenses not covered by the Graduate School. Students are eligible to receive these funds only once during their doctoral training period. Given funding limitations, application does not guarantee support. Application available online.

The BSHS program offers a one-time Dissertation Student Conference Travel Fund of $650 to attend a conference for the purposes of disseminating student research and professional networking prior to graduation. BSHS students are eligible to apply when they are within 1 year of dissertation completion. Application instructions are HERE.

OPEN GRADUATE EDUCATION
The Open Graduate Education Program allows select Brown doctoral students to pursue a Master’s degree in a secondary field. All doctoral students are invited to contemplate and propose their own combination of studies, free of any disciplinary barrier. The Open Graduate Education program builds on the traditions of free inquiry and collaborative research at Brown, a cornerstone of the University's pedagogy.

DOCTORAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS
Enrolled PhD students at Brown are eligible to pursue several certificate programs, designed to promote interdisciplinary study and intellectual community. Certificates can be obtained in Africana Studies, Data Science, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and Spatial Analysis, among others.

INITIATIVE TO MAXIMIZE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT (IMSD)
The Initiative to Maximize Student Development is an educational grant awarded to Brown by NIGMS designed to enhancing doctoral education by creating a supportive and diverse environment that enriches the graduate student experience. A key component of the Initiative to Maximize Student Development are the Skill-Based Training Modules that occur throughout the academic year. These modules have been specifically designed to address gaps, and build skills that may not be readily addressed in the classroom or laboratory. These modules will be complimentary to students’ discipline-specific training, helping to build confident, successful, and well-rounded graduates. Training modules are typically conducted over multiple sessions and are open for all students to participate. Information on modules can be found HERE.
IMSD also offers a program for Senior Scholars. Senior Scholars are graduate students in STEM disciplines who assist faculty module leaders in delivering contents of skill-based training modules to IMSD participants as well as to other graduate student participants. In this collaborative role, Scholars also serve as peer mentors who provide additional advising support to IMSD student participants. Scholars are selected from past IMSD participants and other graduate students within STEM disciplines who have made exceptional progress in their studies and research and are interested in serving in such a role.

OFFICE OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES (OGPS)
This office provides learning and development opportunities to graduate and postdoctoral students in the Division of Biology and Medicine and School of Public Health. They consult on finding sources of funding and preparing proposals, and provide opportunities for professional and career development and networking. You can sign up for their weekly electronic newsletter, the Weekly Update, targeting the Brown University BioMed graduate and postdoc community.

OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY (ORI)
ORI supports the conduct of ethical research at Brown. They provide training on research ethics including responsible conduct of research (RCR) that fulfills NIH and NSF requirements for training grants. ORI also provides guidance for interacting with the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB maintains a wide array of helpful online resources for those conducting human subjects research.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES
CareerLAB supports Master’s and Doctoral students during their graduate school career to complement advice from faculty mentors. They provide support for managing multiple components of graduate education, conducting job searches inside and outside of academia, and negotiating job offers. The Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning partners with CareerLAB to offer an Academic Job Search Series geared towards doctoral students and postdocs. This series is designed to help sort through career options in higher education. Sessions include crafting CVs and cover letters, developing an online presence, negotiating job offers and more.

WRITING CENTER
Brown University provides both individual and group support for improving writing free of charge. The Writing Center, on the 5th Floor of the Science Library, is staffed by graduate students from a variety of academic disciplines. Students can get assistance with all stages of the writing process, from finding a topic through drafting, revising, and final editing. To empower students whose first language is not English, English language learners (ELLs) can seek writing support from the Writing Center ELL team, which provides linguistic and cultural support for ELLs in Brown's graduate programs. For more information, click HERE.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS AND GIS TRAINING
In many fields, there is growing interest in questions involving place and space, ranging from quantitative studies of patterns of behavior and social organization to research on the meaning of locations and place identities. The Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences Program (S4) offers training relevant to BSHS doctoral students. The GIS Institute is an intensive 2-week course focused on visualization, management, and analysis of geographic data. The GIS Institute is offered twice a year, in summer (usually May-June) and during January. S4 also administers a new Graduate Certificate in Spatial Analysis. The certificate is flexibly structured, in order to meet the needs of doctoral students across all disciplines at Brown who have an interest in developing their spatial analysis skills. The certificate requires completion of four courses. Two of these are required foundational courses in spatial theory and methods. The
remaining two courses can be completed in the student’s home department or in a related field.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**
BSHS doctoral students are expected to demonstrate academic, research, and personal integrity, as well as respect for others and for University resources. The *Academic and Student Conduct Codes, Graduate Student edition*, outlines expectations and procedures to be followed when violations are suspected, likely penalties, and the appeals process.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**
Students may not agree with faculty or committee actions related to evaluation of academic progress and standing. This may occur at the point of annual evaluations, or at any of the milestones associated with achieving doctoral candidacy and preparing the thesis. Our goal as a program is to address disagreements directly and constructively. Therefore, we encourage students to discuss their perspectives and concerns and explore possible solutions with their advisor, the Doctoral Program Director, and/or the Department Chair. The Graduate School provides guidance for students with regard to **Grievance Procedures**.

The BSHS program is committed to providing an educational and working environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. Relevant university policies can be found [here](#).

**STUDENT LEAVE POLICY**
During the course of graduate study, a student may need to request a leave of absence. Leaves may be granted for purposes of pursuing professional development opportunities, caring for family members, seeking medical treatment, or for other personal reasons. Applications for leaves of absence (other than medical or psychological leaves) should be sent to the Graduate School at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the leave is to be taken. Terms and conditions for leaves can be found [here](#).

A student experiencing a physical or psychological problem that affects academic performance is encouraged to seek a medical leave for treatment and recovery. Consultation regarding medical leaves can be sought from the Doctoral Program Director or the [Associate Dean of Student Support](#). Information about medical leaves can be found [here](#).

**PARENTAL RELIEF**
The Brown Graduate School offers a [Parental Relief Policy](#) to partially ameliorate the academic and professional demands on graduate students who are primary caregivers of newly born or adoptive children. The relief provides financial support for one semester or summer at the standard rate set by the Graduate School, and effectively “stops the clock” on the student’s academic requirements, while the student maintains full-time student status.
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## Appendix A. Competencies and Associated Learning Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCY</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Mentored research</th>
<th>Qualifying exams</th>
<th>Research ethics training</th>
<th>Seminars/ Journal Club</th>
<th>Presentations / publications</th>
<th>Dissertation research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze and explain health behavior using component principles of behavioral and/or social science theory</td>
<td>2340</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critically evaluate quantitative and/or qualitative research methods and draw appropriate inferences from research findings.</td>
<td>2300 2361 2980</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop or refine a theory-based public health intervention with clear behavior change goal(s).</td>
<td>2360 2380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design a plan to evaluate the fidelity, the active ingredients/ mechanisms of change, and the efficacy of a health behavior intervention.</td>
<td>2360 2380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraise the state of knowledge and knowledge gaps within a substantive area of health behavior.</td>
<td>2300 2361 2980</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and conduct original research on health behaviors and outcomes, using appropriate methods and analyses, and adhering to ethical research principles.</td>
<td>2300 2360 2380</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate advanced communication skills, including by authoring original research that is disseminated to the scientific community.</td>
<td>2988 Any with oral or written requirements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B. BSHS Doctoral Seminar, aka Journal Club

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

- Critically appraise empirical, methodological, or theoretical papers in their field;
- Improve oral presentation skills through scholarly discussion;
- Interact with outside researchers invited to give i-BSHS lectures;
- Gain increased awareness about student- and faculty-initiated research in the SPH;
- Provide peer support and feedback on drafts of research reports, presentations, and other aspects of professional development.

Meeting Schedule
- Journal Club meetings for the BSHS Doctoral Program typically take place on Fridays from 1-2pm. Other days and times may be selected, upon the consensus of the students involved.

Instructor of Record
- An Instructor of Record for BSHS will be selected for each academic year from the BSS faculty.
- The BSS Department Manager will be notified of the Instructor name prior to pre-registration.
- The instructor of record will be assigned a section under PHP 2950.
- Primary responsibilities include: Attending the first meeting of each semester to review guidelines; reviewing attendance; assisting in selection of articles upon request; attending additional Journal Club meetings upon request; assigning grades to students enrolled in PHP 2950 (Journal Club leaders only); collecting and reviewing end-of-semester evaluations.

Attendance Policy
- All doctoral students in the BSHS program are expected to attend Journal Club each semester until they commence work on their dissertations, unless exempted by the Doctoral Program Director.
- The BSHS Doctoral Program Director will notify the Instructor of Record in writing of exemptions granted each semester.
- BSHS Doctoral Students register for course credit (PHP 2950) only once during their enrollment in the doctoral program, typically during one semester of their 2nd or 3rd year of studies. Students registered for PHP 2950 will typically serve as student leaders for a semester.

BSHS Journal Club Structure
The activities vary according to student interest and the i-BSHS lecture schedule.

- All BSHS doctoral students are required to attend i-BSHS lectures typically held monthly during the academic year on Fridays, 12:00-1:00pm, as well as the 1:00-2:00pm lunch/discussion following each lecture; 1-2 representative articles should be obtained...
from the i-BSHS speaker in advance; students will be expected to read and engage in informed Q&A.

- On at least one Friday each month, two discussion facilitators will be designated to lead the discussion of an article; they will select an article and distribute it electronically to the BSHS doctoral students one week in advance.

- On a regular basis, (a) a senior BSHS student may present a work in progress, or practice a talk and get feedback from peers; or (b) a SPH faculty member will be invited to discuss one of his/her recent articles (the selected article should be distributed electronically to the BSHS doctoral students one week in advance); or alternatively (c) a meeting could be devoted to exploring a professional development topic (preparing CVs; writing literature reviews; supervising undergraduate RAs; etc.).

### Student Participant Responsibilities Journal Club Leadership

Student leaders will rotate each semester such that each doctoral student will serve as Journal Club Leader for one semester, typically during their 2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} year. Two students may serve together as co-Leaders depending on cohort size. Student leaders are responsible for:

- Creating and updating the semester Journal Club schedule (typically done at the beginning of the Fall semester for the entire year).

- Coordinating/assigning weekly student discussion facilitators (including sending reminders; circulating papers in advance).

- Inviting BSHS and/or any SPH faculty members to participate to discuss one of their recent journal articles or address a professional development issue.

- Ordering food, as needed, with the assistance of the Department Manager. The Journal Club has a small food budget for this purpose.

- Recording attendance for the Instructor of Record.

- Administering and summarizing a student evaluation of the course in December and May.

### Student Discussion Facilitators

- Identify an article or project in-progress for their session.

- Create a set of discussion questions.

- Send the article (published or draft, as appropriate) and discussion questions to the students at least one week before their Journal Club date.

- Lead the Journal Club discussion, encouraging participation of all attendees and respectful sharing of ideas.

### Cross-Department Forum

- A cross-departmental forum may be coordinated each semester.

PHP 2950 is graded as pass/fail; participation in this course constitutes approximately 180 hours as follows: 22 meetings + 33 hours reading/preparation + 5 i-BSHS lectures = 60 hours annually × 3 years.
Appendix C. PhD Curriculum Completion Checklist

See PDF
Appendix D. Course Waiver Request Form

See PDF
Appendix E. Guidelines for BSHS Independent Studies in Substantive Area and Methods (PHP 2980)

Goals: (a) to develop depth and breadth of knowledge within a focused research area of behavioral and social sciences and (b) to prepare BSHS doctoral students for their qualifying exams by applying general principles of theory and research design to their chosen topic. The first Independent Study should focus on the substantive area (e.g., developing a general understanding of a health issue or problem behavior), and the second Independent Study should focus more specifically on methodological issues (e.g., novel intervention approaches, important design, measurement, or analytic challenges or innovations). These courses are primarily designed to help the student develop mastery of a defined literature and should result in significant evidence of scholarship: a literature review that informs a Dissertation proposal, drafts of portions of a grant proposal, or a first draft of a review paper or introduction to an empirical paper destined for publication. Note that the Independent Study experience should be distinct from activities associated with the student’s research placement or other classes.

Role of the Student

- Take charge of your learning, demonstrating initiative, curiosity, and scholarly rigor
- Propose topic(s) and refine with input from advisor.
- Generate an initial reading list, which will likely grow over the course of the semester.
- Negotiate with advisor what final product would best promote your professional development.
- Generate a timetable with input from advisor to ensure timely completion of deliverables.
- Become a knowledgeable resource on your chosen topic.
- Initiate regular meetings with faculty advisor.

Role of the Advisor/Independent Study Instructor

- Meet with student regularly.
- Help student to shape topic focus of Independent Study and initial set of readings.
- Engage student by posing clarifying questions, encouraging elaboration of ideas, and suggesting relevant authors/readings.
- Help student achieve milestones on a mutually-approved timetable.
- Conduct a mid-semester review: (a) adding to or adjusting reading list (as appropriate); (b) firming up plans for final paper; (c) revising timeline as needed; and (d) provide feedback on quality and timeliness of scholarship.
- Assign final grade based on student engagement and final products/deliverables.

Process: to be negotiated between student and advisor; suggestions include

- Holding weekly meetings.
- Maintaining a Google Drive folder containing copies of articles and other sources, accessible to both student and advisor.
Developing an Endnote database of references for future use.

Bringing copies of annotated references of articles to discuss with advisor; an annotated reference is not a copy of the abstract but rather the student’s notes, based on a critical reading of the study goals, methods, and findings, with strengths and weaknesses highlighted.

Generating an outline of final paper/product at midpoint of semester to be reviewed with advisor.

**Deliverables:** These Independent Studies will culminate in 3 products, to be submitted to the advisor (or other instructor) for grading.

- A complete reading list representing all sources read during the semester on which you can reasonably be considered informed; structure to be negotiated.

- A final paper, summarizing the state of knowledge on the topic. For example, the final paper in the Spring might resemble a book chapter for a general audience, whereas the final paper in the Fall might be a draft of a more focused literature review destined for publication. Alternatively, if approved by the advisor, final products might be grant sections such as the significance, innovation, and aims (Spring) or the approach (Fall); or draft of an empirical paper for which you assembled the literature review and manuscript draft. **Note that the written product from this course should be unique and not overlap with the final paper submitted for another course.**

- A set of 4-5 questions addressing important issues (substantive in the Spring, and methodological in the Fall) in selected field of study; consider some or all of the following prompts (as relevant) in developing questions:

  - What do we know about this topic?
  - What are gaps in knowledge that point to future research directions?
  - What is the role of theory re: current understanding and/or moving the field forward?
  - Issues related to diversity, health disparities, and/or social justice?
  - Integration of social and behavioral perspectives to understand etiology/prevention/ intervention?
  - What are the controversies related to this topic?
  - What are key methodological challenges related to this topic? Promising strategies to address methodological challenges?

**Important:** Submit the final copy of your list of questions (once approved by your Independent Study instructor) to the Doctoral Program Director. These will be used to generate Part II of your Qualifying Exam.
Appendix F. Guidelines for BSHS Doctoral Program Teaching Experience (TE; PHP 2988)

Description

- The Teaching Experience (TE) is a professional development requirement for PhD students in the School of Public Health designed to expand practical teaching skills under the mentorship of an experienced instructor.

- Specific activities and responsibilities are tailored to student learning goals and so are negotiated between student and instructor; examples include some subset of the following pedagogical activities: participating in syllabus revision/development, contributing to lesson plans, developing study sheets and other course materials, developing and grading homework assignments or exams, delivering guest lecture(s), facilitating class discussion, holding office hours, and/or running review sessions.

- The TE is a primarily a learning opportunity for doctoral students; secondarily, TE activities should add value to the class by enhancing the experience of students enrolled in the course and assist the faculty instructor with the administration and delivery of the course.

- Students enrolled as TEs are expected to attend at least 2 teaching-related seminars, consistent with the educational focus of the experience.

- The TE is taken for course credit, using the designated course code PHP 2988; students should register for the section assigned to the course instructor they are working with.

- Your TE placement must be approved in advance by the Doctoral Program Director, to ensure that it aligns with your program of study and departmental priorities.

Timing: TEs can be proposed at any time after the first year. Typically, you will set up your TE after you have completed your TA requirement, although exceptions may occur when scheduling of a course that is a particularly good fit does not allow for the typical sequence. Therefore, most students will enroll for TE in their 3rd or 4th year.

Eligible courses: Most of the courses taught by BSS faculty could provide a TE experience. However, students are free to approach faculty in other departments with a TE proposal. If considering doing a TE with a non-BSS instructor, share these guidelines to convey BSHS program expectations.

Prerequisites

- The doctoral students should have both taken the course previously and earned a B or better, OR the course aligns with an area of student expertise that can be established independently of taking the course.

- Students must (a) obtain permission of the course instructor, and (b) complete the Sheridan Center workshop for new graduate TAs (Preparing for the First Days of Class) prior to starting the TE.

Expectations of the student

- Reach out to potential faculty advisors early in the semester prior to the course starting to discuss your TE goals and get confirmation that the faculty member is willing and able to supervise your TE.
Inform the Doctoral Program Director of your intent to TE in the following semester during registration period, by sending an email with the details (course, semester, and instructor) with the course instructor cc-ed.

Initiate planning meetings with faculty instructor well before the semester starts to ensure that the proposed TE activities will be integrated into the course structure and syllabus.

Familiarize yourself with the requirements of the TE experience, which include (a) completing the Brown TA orientation, (b) 2 Sheridan Center Teaching Workshops throughout the semester, and (c) devoting at least 180 hours to activities associated with the TE.

Generate a syllabus for your TE independent study, which may evolve over the course of the semester that reflects how you are going to meet the goals of the TE in the framework of the course; a sample outline follows.

Attend all class meetings, unless mutually agreed-upon in advance.

Allocate and protect time for meetings with the faculty instructor and student office hours as agreed upon.

Expectations of the faculty instructor

- Provide the TE with the course syllabus as soon as possible.
- Meet with student regularly; encourage student to set agendas and follow-up with action items.
- Discuss topics raised in Sheridan Center teaching trainings.
- Provide opportunities for teaching activities that meet student goals for developing teaching skills; no more than 10 hours/week should be devoted to routine course tasks (e.g., office hours, grading).
- Provide specific performance feedback and conduct mid-and end-of-semester reviews.
- Assign final grade based on quality of student engagement and contributions.

*Sample* syllabus outline for Teaching Experience Independent Study (PHP 2988)

**Fall 2021 Course Information**

**Title:**
Instructor of record:
Meeting time and place:
TA office hours: [if appropriate]
Course overview:

**Description of Teaching Experience**

TE planning/supervision meetings time and place:
Overall learning goal(s): [e.g., to gain knowledge and practical experience related to classroom teaching for higher education]
Professional development objectives: [frame in action terms: attend.. assist with… develop… conduct…]

Planned Sheridan Center workshops/events attended:
Planned readings related to teaching: [see Sheridan Center website]
Allocation of time: [consider time preparing for and attending class, office hours, preparation of materials and class content, supervision, teaching workshops and related reading; *should add to at least 180 hours for the semester*, consistent with expectations for Brown courses]
Methods of evaluation: [these are mutually agreed upon bases for the course grade]
Appendix G. BSHS Dissertation Research Grant

**Purpose:** The goal of this program is to provide funds to enhance the quality and scope of dissertation research by BSHS doctoral students. These small grants of up to $2500 each are designed to help doctoral students to facilitate original human subjects research that may be outside of the scope of their advisors’ research programs and/or to expand their skill sets through training not provided by Brown or the SPH. Dissertation grants may be used for (a) participant payments, (b) training in specific data analysis techniques essential for the dissertation research or purchase and use of statistical packages, otherwise not available at Brown, (c) transcription or translation services, or (d) other research-related expenses associated with an approved dissertation study for which there are no other available sources of support. BSHS Dissertation Research Grants should not be used primarily for travel since there are other sources of travel funds through the Graduate School.

**Eligibility:** Applicants should be doctoral candidates in good standing with approved dissertation proposals. The grant should support one or more of the approved dissertation studies. Students are eligible to request these funds only once.

**Application:** The application should include (a) a scientific rationale for the requested funds (≤ 1 page), (b) a budget (≤ 1 page), (c) a statement of support from the dissertation advisor (≤ 1 page), and (d) a copy of the relevant chapter from the dissertation proposal. Submit all electronically to Linda Angela.

**Review:** Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the DGS and 2 additional faculty members. They will evaluate each application on its merits, considering the justification for the expense, the likelihood that the award will enhance the scientific rigor of the dissertation, and the advisor statement. The department will support up to 4 grants per year, as long as funds are available.

**Final report:** A statement (no more than one page in length) should be submitted to the DGS upon completion of the research supported by this grant, describing the role the grant funds played in the successful implementation of the study. These final reports will be used to evaluate the impact of this program. Please acknowledge support from this source when disseminating findings, when appropriate.
Appendix H. Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form

See PDF
Appendix I. Dissertation Proposal Date Request Form

See PDF
Appendix J. Dissertation Proposal Results Form

See PDF
Appendix K. Individual Development Plan (IDP) Worksheet

The IDP is a helpful tool that gives students the opportunity to articulate and track their short-term and long-term career goals. The NIH expects IDPs to be completed for students receiving NIH funding. In addition, the School of Public Health (SPH) requires that all Doctoral students, regardless of funding, utilize the IDP. Both the NIH and the SPH require that departments monitor and track completion of IDPs. This information will be used by programs for self-evaluation and improvement. The Brown University Graduate School also requests that students complete the Graduate School Digital CV (GSDCV) on an annual basis. These two documents complement each other and you will receive guidance from your program on how and when to update them.

For complete IDP submission instruction and to download the appropriate forms, please click HERE.

The following structure is designed to facilitate the development of your personal IDP. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the prompts below and consult with your advisor(s) prior to completing this form.

Section 1) Brief Overview of Your Research Progress and Major Accomplishments Over the Past Year [Note that this section overlaps with your GSDCV update for this year.]

1. Please list your publications this year using a standard citation format *(Include: All authors, Title, Year of Publication, Name of Journal, Volume, Page #’s. If available, please give PMCID #)*

2. Please list any honors and awards you received this past year *(Include any fellowships, grants written and applied for, professional society awards, external travel awards)*

3. Please list any professional meetings you attended *(Include name, location, and date/s)*

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

5. Please describe any teaching activity *(TA, TE, Sheridan Center trainings, etc.)*

6. Please list committee or other service activity

7. Please list any other activities of scholarly or professional relevance. This may include anti-racist or social justice work, community volunteer activities, mentoring experiences, etc.

As you outline your plans for next year and beyond, consider how your activities could contribute to anti-racism and/or social justice.

Section 2) Plans for Next Academic Year: Your goals and objectives for the coming year

1. Your research goals *(brief paragraph)*

2. Anticipated publications *(indicate projected titles)*

3. Anticipated attendance at meetings or workshops

4. Fellowship or other funding applications planned

5. Other anticipated professional training *(Course work, teaching activity)*
6. Please reflect on ways that your learning and/or scholarly activities (topic, methods, analysis, lab environment, community engagement, etc.) could contribute to social justice, equity, and/or anti-racism in the next year, and what kinds of support or collaboration would be helpful towards those ends.

Section 3) Long-term Goals:

1. Please discuss your long-term goals *(these will likely evolve in specificity over your years in the program)*

2. Identify target dates for the remaining milestones of your graduate training

3. Define specific skills and strengths that you want to develop (informed by discussions with your advisor/s) to help you achieve the long-term goals you identified above

4. Define the approaches to obtain the specific skills and strengths described in the previous question together with anticipated time frames *(Examples include courses, technical skills, teaching, supervision, conferences, workshops, etc.)*