



**BROWN**  
School of Public Health

# Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research

## Student Handbook

2021/22

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## Brown University School of Public Health

### **Learn Public Health by Doing Public Health**

Through teaching and research, the Brown University School of Public Health trains future public health leaders, advances knowledge on pressing health challenges, and enhances population health and well-being for all. Our students *learn* public health by *doing* public health.

### **School Vision**

To champion health and health equity around the world

### **School Mission**

To improve the health of all populations, especially those most vulnerable, by producing world-class public health scholarship, forging strong community partnerships, and educating the next generation of diverse public health leaders.

### **School Goals**

The Brown School of Public Health aims to achieve its mission by doing the following:

1. Rigorously preparing the next generation of diverse public health leaders, from undergraduates through postdoctoral fellows, to address the health needs of all people, including those of historically underserved or vulnerable populations
2. Generating world-class public health scholarship that addresses the health needs of all people, including historically underserved or vulnerable populations
3. Cultivating strong partnerships with communities and governmental entities in order to address the health needs of all people, including historically underserved or vulnerable populations
4. Ensuring that the School's infrastructure supports operational effectiveness, through enhanced philanthropy, improved financial practice, and expanded physical space

### **School Values**

The School's values are the fundamental beliefs that guide our enduring attitudes and actions. These values are critical to preserving and enhancing the health and well-being of humanity.

#### *Excellence*

The School aspires to the highest levels of excellence in research, education, and service to the community.

#### *Equity*

The School is committed to undertaking scholarship, teaching, and service that advances the health of all populations, including and especially historically underserved or vulnerable communities.

#### *Diversity and Inclusion*

The School continually strives to recruit students, faculty, and staff from a wide variety of cultures, backgrounds, and lived experiences and to foster a culture in which all people feel safe, included, and valued.

#### *Collaboration*

The School fosters interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty, students, and staff.

#### *Innovation*

The School stimulates innovation, creativity, and ingenuity in research, education, and community partnerships.

### *Community Focus*

The School forges respectful, ethical, high-impact partnerships to address local, national, and global community health needs.

### **SPH Research**

With \$64 million in annual external funding, the Brown University School of Public Health ranks among the [top 5 schools of public health for NIH funding](#). Our nationally-renowned research centers and institutes focus training and research on key areas including HIV/AIDS, addiction, global health, aging, and environmental health.

### **Academics**

Our four departments are the academic homes of our graduate degree programs.

- [Behavioral and Social Sciences](#)
- [Biostatistics](#)
- [Epidemiology](#)
- [Health Services, Policy and Practice](#)

### **Research**

With \$64 million in annual external funding, the Brown University School of Public Health ranks among the [top 5 schools of public health for NIH funding](#). Our nationally-renowned research centers and institutes focus training and research on key areas including HIV/AIDS, addiction, global health, aging, and environmental health.

- [Brown University AIDS Program](#)
- [Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies](#)
- [Centers for Behavioral and Preventive Medicine](#)
- [Center for Children's Environmental Health](#)
- [Center for Epidemiologic Research](#)
- [Center for Evidence Synthesis in Health](#)
- [Center for Gerontology and Healthcare Research](#)
- [Hassenfeld Child Health Innovation Institute](#)
- [Center for Health Promotion and Health Equity](#)
- [International Health Institute](#)
- [Mindfulness Center](#)
- [Center for Primary Care and Prevention](#)
- [Center for Statistical Sciences](#)

## The Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research (CTR) Program

### The Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research Mission

The Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research employs an interdisciplinary approach to create connections between disciplines, and encourage creative, innovative approaches to tackle complex medical questions. The goal of clinical and translational research is to extend basic scientific research in the physical, biologic and behavioral sciences into the clinical arena, including studies that will develop and evaluate clinical interventions and will ultimately improve individual and population health. By translating basic research into improved clinical outcomes, clinical and translational research enables researchers to provide new treatments to patients more efficiently and quickly.

### The Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research Curriculum

The goal of this program is to train clinicians and basic scientists to extend basic scientific research into the clinical arena, ultimately leading to improvements in individual and population health. By translating basic research into improved clinical outcomes, researchers and clinicians are able to provide new treatments to patients more efficiently and quickly.

Students in the program will complete nine courses, including courses in introduction to research methods, advanced research methods, scientific writing, biostatistics and applied data analysis, and topics in clinical and translational research. Students will also choose two electives and participate in a series of seminars, workshops, and mentoring sessions. In addition, students will be required to complete the online, not for credit course, PHP1001, Foundations in Public Health.

### CTR Core Course Requirements

#### Introduction to Research Methods

*Students must take one of the following two courses:*

Introduction to Methods in Epidemiologic Research (PHP2120)

**OR**

Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods (PHP2150)

#### Biostatistics and Applied Data Analysis

*Students must complete one of the following two course sequences:*

Sequence 1:

Biostatistics and Applied Data Analysis I (PHP2507) and Biostatistics and Applied Data Analysis II (PHP2508)

**OR**

Sequence 2:

Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis (PHP2510) and Applied Regression Analysis (PHP2511)

#### Scientific Writing

*Students must take the following course:*

Research Grant Writing for Public Health (PHP2090)

#### Advanced Research Methods

*Students must take two of the following advanced methods courses:*

Statistical Programming R (PHP1560/2560)

Clinical Trials Methodology (PHP2030)

Survey Research Methods (PHP2040)  
Qualitative Methods in Health Research (PHP2060)  
Interpretation and Application of Epidemiology (PHP2180)  
Medicare: A Data Based Policy Examination (PHP2410E)  
Introduction to Evidence-Based Medicine and Meta-Analysis (PHP2415)  
Introduction to Health Decision Analysis (PHP2465A)  
Methods in Informatics and Data Science for Health (PHP2561/BIOL1555)

### **Topics in Clinical, Translational and Health Services Research**

*Students must enroll in this half credit course two times to fulfill the one credit requirement. The half credit course meets approximately every other week for the full academic year. Students participate in the course in years 1 and 2, but register for the course in the spring of year 1 and in the spring of year 2.*

Topics in Clinical, Translational and Health Services Research (PHP2470) (half credit)

### **CTR Electives**

The complete list of approved CTR electives can be found on the CTR Program [website](#). Additional courses at Brown University may count toward the CTR degree with approval from the CTR Program Director. With permission of the CTR Program Director, a student may register for one credit of PHP2980, Graduate Independent Study/Thesis Research, for their thesis work and have it count as a CTR elective. Requests to register for PHP2980 should be sent to the CTR Program Director and should include the thesis proposal. If approved, the student also needs permission from the faculty member serving as the thesis advisor. Typically, students register for PHP2980 in the section of their thesis advisor. If the advisor does not have a section of PHP2980, the student should contact [elizabeth\\_jackvony@brown.edu](mailto:elizabeth_jackvony@brown.edu) for assistance.

### **CTR Advising**

The CTR Program Director, Amal Trivedi, MD, MPH is the academic advisor for all CTR students. During this course, students are advised on the process of selecting a thesis advisor and reader for their thesis project. Students should be formulating the thesis topic during the **first year of study**. In order to facilitate this process, students are required to present their work in PHP2470 at least once during the course of the academic year, addressing the questions below:

- What is your research question?
- Why is this important?
- Briefly describe potential methods for your study.
- What help would you like from the group?
- What are the next steps?

The CTR Program Director is available to assist students with selecting an appropriate thesis topic, thesis advisor and thesis reader based on their current work and career goals.

### **CTR Thesis**

Given the applied nature of the CTR Program, students will develop a portfolio to meet the following thesis requirements. These requirements are developmental in nature and should be completed throughout the student's studies. Students will be encouraged to engage in interdisciplinary work. The thesis requirements will help to move students forward in their career in clinical and translational research. Each student should work with his/her advisor and reader to determine the best timing for completion of the following requirements. All thesis plans must be approved prior to beginning the project.

All CTR students are required to complete a thesis, which will be composed of the following parts:

- First author submitted abstract to regional, national or international meeting AND
- First author publishable quality paper AND
- Submittable grant proposal

OR

- First author submitted abstract to regional, national or international meeting AND
- Two first author publishable quality papers

**The thesis proposal form can be found in Appendix A.** Students must submit this proposal form, signed by the thesis advisor and reader, accompanied by a one-page description of the thesis work, by **April 15 of the year prior to their expected graduation year**. The thesis project description should include a brief description of the abstract and the conference/meeting to which it will be submitted, a clear description of paper(s), and a description of the grant proposal, if applicable, as well as a timeline for completing the various thesis components. Be sure to clearly define and justify the thesis project, including a statement of the proposed final product and its contribution to your educational and career goals. Students should complete this proposal form, including appropriate signatures, and submit it to the Clinical and Translational Research Program Director, Amal Trivedi, MD, MPH for approval. Students will receive an e-mail confirmation when the thesis proposal has been approved.

The CTR Thesis must be complete, with signatures of the advisor, reader and program director, and submitted through Brown's [electronic theses and dissertation \(ETD\) system](#) **no later than April 1 of the year they plan to graduate**. Graduate students must follow the [Master's Thesis Guidelines](#) found on the Graduate School website.

With permission, students may register for one section of PHP2980, Graduate Independent Study/Thesis Research, for their thesis work and have it count as an elective. See details under the CTR Electives section.

## CTR Good Academic Standing Policy – Fall 2021

### Grading

Students receive full letter grades of A, B, C (no plusses or minuses) or No Credit. There is no grade of D, and failing grades are not recorded on the permanent external record (transcript). However, grades of “No Credit” and late withdrawals from courses are recorded on the Internal Academic Record and this information is used in assessing a student’s academic standing, as well as other purposes (counseling, Committee on Academic Standing considerations, etc.). For the purposes of assessing academic performance within the CTR Program, late withdrawals are defined as withdrawing from a course within five weeks of the scheduled final exam date.

Brown offers the option of registering for courses Satisfactory/No Credit (S/NC). However, CTR students are required to take all core courses for a letter grade, with the exception of PHP2470 Topics in CTR, which students take for S/NC (Satisfactory/No Credit) and courses that are set up by the instructor as mandatory S/NC.

### Good Academic Standing

To be in good academic standing, students in the CTR Program must achieve a “B” average. All courses taken at Brown while enrolled in the CTR Program are included in the assessment of academic standing. Only courses taken at Brown while enrolled in the CTR Program are included in the assessment of academic standing. As Brown does not calculate a numeric GPA, students are considered to have at least a “B” average if one of the following two conditions exist:

- The student has received a grade of “B” or above for all courses included in the assessment of academic performance

- Any courses in which the student withdrew late or received a “C” or “NC” are balanced by an equivalent number of courses for which the student received an “A”. Full courses must be balanced with full courses, and half courses may be balanced by either half courses or full courses.

Students must be in good academic standing to be eligible to graduate.

### **Progress Requirements**

At the end of each semester, when grades become available, the CTR Program Director reviews the progress of each CTR student. Students who fall out of good academic standing will be issued a warning in writing. This letter will include the areas where the student has not met expectations and instructions on how to regain good academic standing and remain in the CTR Program. Students who receive a warning letter will be re-evaluated at the end of the next semester. If it is determined that satisfactory progress has not been made toward achieving good academic standing, students will be notified that they are being dismissed from the CTR Program.

### **Repeating Courses**

Students who receive an “NC” or have a late withdrawal from a core requirement will be offered no more than one additional opportunity to meet the core requirement. If the student again receives an “NC” or has a late withdrawal, the student will be dismissed from the CTR Program.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Students must be in good academic standing to be eligible to graduate. In order to graduate, students must maintain a “B” average across the nine (9) courses (see Academic Standing above), and complete the thesis project. CTR students are also required to follow all guidelines established by the Graduate School and the Registrar.

### **Deadline for Completing the CTR**

Full-time students generally take two years to complete the CTR. Students may request part-time status but need to complete all degree requirements within five years. In unusual situations, where a student needs to extend beyond the five-year timeline, the student can request an extension. Extensions will only be granted if there is an acceptable explanation for the delay in meeting the degree requirements and if there is an approved plan for meeting the degree requirements in a timely manner. The request must include a detailed timeline and plan for finishing all CTR degree requirements. Requests will be reviewed by the CTR Program Director and also by the Dean of the Graduate School.

## **Graduate School**

The Graduate School Handbook defines the most important policies, procedures and practices that guide graduate education at Brown University. It includes information on the Graduate School rules, grading standards, graduate credit, conference travel funds, student loans, leaves of absence, codes of conduct, and grievance procedures. Graduate students must abide by the rules of the Graduate School, as well as the rules of the MPH Program. The Graduate School handbook can be found [here](#).

## **Leaves of Absence**

### **Leave of Absence Request**

Any student needing to request a leave of absence (with the exception of a medical leave) should submit a Leave of Absence Request form found in [UFUNDS](#) (more information can be found on Graduate School [website](#)), at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the leave is to be taken. Failure to inform the Graduate School means that the student will still be considered active and will be billed for tuition. The CTR Program Director must approve all leave of absence application for students enrolled in the CTR Program.

## Medical Leave

A student experiencing a serious physical or psychological problem that affects his/her academic performance may be granted a leave for treatment and recovery. A student experiencing difficulty in this realm should consult with the Graduate Associate Dean in the [Office of Student Life](#), as well as [University Health Services](#) and/or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#). Unlike other leaves, a medical leave or psychological leave of absence can be made at any time; the request must be made through the office or the Graduate Associate Dean in the Office of Student Life (located in Graduate Center, 42 Charlesfield St., 4<sup>th</sup> floor; 401-863-3145).

## Codes of Student Conduct

The Graduate School requires all graduate students to complete required online courses on [Academic Code: Graduate Student Edition](#) and [Title IX](#) Training. Complete the online course on Academic Code & Code of Student Conduct as soon as you receive the links in your Brown email over the summer. An online Title IX course will be sent early in the fall semester.

## Grievances

It is expected that students enrolled in the CTR Program will have the best possible relationship with colleagues and faculty during the course of their graduate work at Brown. However, it is possible that a student may not agree with faculty or committee actions related to evaluation of academic progress and standing. The intent of the faculty is to address disagreements directly and constructively. Therefore, we encourage students initially to discuss their concerns and explore possible solutions with the CTR Program Director, and/or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the School of Public Health. The University's faculty handbook has a detailed description of grievance procedures, and students are referred to that [document](#).

Procedures exist for the resolution of non-academic grievances, such as complaints of harassment involving sexually or racially offensive behavior, and discrimination as cited in the University's Non-Discrimination Policy. There are also established procedures for reviewing the cases of students whose actions may require disciplinary measures. Inquiries about these procedures should be directed to the CTR Program Director, the Dean of the School of Public Health, and/or the Deans of the Graduate School.

## Wellness and Support Resources

Student and Employee Accessibility Services ([SEAS](#)) coordinates and facilitates services for students with physical, psychological, and learning disabilities, and temporary injuries (office located at 20 Benevolent St., 1<sup>st</sup> floor).

Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](#)) provides free confidential counseling (located at 450 Brook Street, Providence, 401-863-3476). CAPS offers Saturday appointment for graduate students from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. during the academic year at Health services, 13 Brown Street.

Information about COVID 19 and the university's response to the pandemic can be found at <https://healthy.brown.edu/>.

International SOS registration is strongly encouraged for all students studying abroad. Students studying abroad during the academic year or summer should register the trip with the Brown University Global Assistance Program. This program provides 24-hour worldwide medical, security, and travel assistance, including emergency evacuation. More information can be found on Brown's [International SOS portal](#).

## Brown ID Card

In order to access University libraries, copy machines, etc., students will need a Brown ID card. New students should obtain a Brown ID card at the [Brown Card Office](#), which is located on the 5th floor of Page-Robinson Hall at 69 Brown Street. Access to the School of Public Health building at 121 South Main Street requires an additional approval. Generally, SPH will request the approval in advance, so that students' cards work in the SPH building when they arrive. If your card does not work at 121 South Main Street, contact Elizabeth Jackvony, Coordinator of Dual Degree Programs, as soon as possible ([elizabeth\\_jackvony@brown.edu](mailto:elizabeth_jackvony@brown.edu)).

## Brown Email

Matriculated graduate students can set up their Brown electronic services and establish their Brown e-mail accounts before the start of the program by going to <https://myaccount.brown.edu/activate>. Once the CTR Program begins, all e-mail communications will be sent to the students' Brown e-mail account.

**Appendix A: THESIS PROPOSAL**  
**MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH**

Students must submit this proposal form, signed by the thesis advisor and reader, **accompanied by a one-page description of the thesis work, by April 15 of the year prior to their expected graduation year.** The thesis project description should include a brief description of the abstract and the conference/meeting to which it will be submitted, a clear description of paper(s), and a description of the grant proposal, if applicable, as well as a timeline for completing the various thesis components. Be sure to clearly define and justify the thesis project, including a statement of the **proposed final product** and its contribution to your educational and career goals. Students should complete this proposal form, including appropriate signatures, and submit it to the Clinical and Translational Research Program Director, Amal Trivedi, MD, MPH for approval. Students will receive an e-mail confirmation when the thesis proposal has been approved.

**The ScM in Clinical and Translational Research (CTR) Thesis Proposal must be approved by the thesis advisor and reader, as well as the CTR Program Director, Amal Trivedi, MD, MPH.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please indicate the final thesis product:**

- First author submitted abstract to regional, national or international meeting AND  
First author publishable quality paper AND  
Submittable grant proposal  
OR
- First author submitted abstract to regional, national or international meeting AND  
Two first author publishable quality papers

**Thesis Advisor**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email address

- I have read and approve this thesis proposal and I agree to  
serve as the thesis advisor for this project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Thesis Reader**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email address

- I have read and approve this thesis proposal and I agree to  
serve as the thesis advisor for this project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research Thesis Proposal has been approved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CTR Program Director Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

This Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Research Thesis Proposal has been approved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CTR Program Director, Amal Trivedi, MD, MPH**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**