



Theatre Arts and Performance Studies

Doctoral Program

HANDBOOK

This document supersedes previous TAPS Doctoral Student Handbooks.

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

Inquiries regarding the **MFA in Playwriting** should be addressed to Christina Anderson, Box 1897, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912; email: taps@brown.edu.

Inquiries regarding the **Brown/Trinity MFAs in Acting or Directing** should be addressed to Jill Jann, MFA Program Administrator, Trinity Repertory Company, 201 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903; email: jill_jann@brown.edu or see www.browntrinity.com.

1) Doctoral Program in Theatre and Performance Studies

The PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies, launched in 2002, builds on the strength of the long-standing Brown Masters Program that historically provided the field of theatre with many excellent scholars. The PhD program stresses research and scholarship in theatre history, theory and criticism, and performance studies. It is an ideal degree for students interested in the intersections between artistry and scholarship, as there are many excellent opportunities to collaborate with artists as well as opportunities to develop scholarship in interdisciplinary modalities. The program is committed to providing students with a firm grasp of the fields of theatre studies and performance studies, an understanding of the historical underpinnings of theatre and performance practices globally, and an ability to employ performance theory and criticism in the service of scholarship across a range of objects of study. This is to say that Brown's PhD has a strong commitment both to theatre history and to the academic histories informing the "broad spectrum" of performance studies. The program is committed to helping to place students in academic positions, should they so desire, upon completion of the program. Faculty work closely with students to prepare them best for the requirements of the job market, even as the faculty work hard to foster each student's individual, often less market-driven passions.

The goals of the PhD program are: to develop a student's advanced knowledge base in the general areas of Theatre and Performance Studies and in his/her particular research area(s) of expertise; to enhance and nuance ways of knowing, how to learn and particular methods of inquiry that serve and are served by new and improved approaches to the acquisition and application of knowledge in theory and in practice. Our program seeks to develop scholars who can think critically and creatively in their fields and in the wider world, to confront universal and contemporary problems that engage with the life of the mind and of disciplines and cultures. With this in mind, we encourage creative project work in all our classes and a high level of critical rigor. Ours is a small program that allows for and emphasizes close teacher-student interaction. Our graduate faculty works closely with the Graduate School to facilitate student learning and development and together we troubleshoot the pressures and demands that doctoral work can bring. Students can and should inform the Director of Graduate Studies if they have a disability or other condition that might require accommodation or modification of any of the course procedures that are outlined in this handbook. A student may speak to the DGS after class, during office hours and by appointment, the same thing holding true for other members of the PhD program faculty. As part of this process, a student should be registered with Student and Employee Accessibility Services (SEAS) and provide the DGS with an academic accommodation letter from them. For more information, contact SEAS at (401) 863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu.

Graduate Students in Theatre and Performance Studies at Brown University benefit from the flexibility of Brown's graduate system that allows opportunities to take classes throughout the University as well as with distinguished field faculty. The Department maintains close working relationships with the Africana Studies Department and Rites and Reason Theatre as well as Modern Culture and Media, History of Art and Architecture, and the American Studies Slavic Studies, and Comparative Literature departments, with faculty cross-appointments in these departments. We also maintain close affiliation with the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity and the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women. All of these associations make the Brown environment alive with opportunities in critical theory and the performing arts. The confluence of a variety of approaches assures an atmosphere of debate, discovery, and overall rigor. A dynamic theatre season at Brown and a slate of courses with significant strength in world theatre histories, performance theories, cultural studies, and contemporary performance allow a student to determine the right mix of theatre studies and performance studies for his or her particular project. The libraries at Brown also provide exceptional resources for research and house several special collections, among them the Harris Collection of American Drama and Poetry; the Smith Collection of

Conjuring, *Magicana*, and *Popular Entertainment Forms*; the Albert-Bernard Shaw Collection; and the John Carter Brown Library, which is renowned for its historical sources pertaining to the Americas, both North and South, before ca. 1825.

The program offers opportunities for pedagogical development as well. Doctoral students may serve as TAs in one or more courses in our three-course theatre history sequence (TAPS 1230 1240, 1250). More experienced doctoral students may teach a theatre history course to Brown/Trinity MFA Acting and Directing students downtown, the content and focus of which are determined by the doctoral student in consultation with his/her graduate program advisor. Advanced doctoral students may also teach an independent course of their own design in a student's area of specialty in the Department after consulting with the PhD program faculty. Many of our doctoral students receive invaluable experience shadowing for a semester our master Speech teacher Barbara Tannenbaum in her course "Persuasive Communication," preparatory to leading a section of this course under Professor Tannenbaum's supervision for two semesters, and culminating in teaching a section of the course that is all their own whenever possible. A student's teaching is evaluated by the Graduate Faculty Committee and recommendations are made to the student regarding how to improve their teaching of a particular course and in general. Graduate colloquia targeted at the theme of professionalization, or getting students ready for the job market, may include sections on improving communication in teaching, presenting conference papers and writing for presentation and for publication. Every effort is made by the PhD program faculty to place graduate student TAs in courses that match their research and pedagogical talents and experience, as well as to provide them with an array of teaching opportunities. Although the Department takes seriously the training of doctoral students in teaching by affording them practical classroom experience, a Brown graduate student need not teach every semester and Brown does not take advantage of graduate students by relying on them as teachers. Doctoral students can expect to teach and/or proctor in some capacity for at least three out of the years that they are in residency, excluding years in which they are eligible to receive fellowship support. Additional doctoral student teaching of their own courses is available on a competitive basis through Summer@Brown teaching opportunities in the School of Professional Studies. A number of our doctoral students have also taught courses at Wheaton College through the Brown/Wheaton Fellows Program.

Individual faculty members utilize TAs and Proctorships differently. TAs will generally be required to present two or more classroom lectures during the course of the semester on a topic they agree upon with the professor for whom they are TA-ing. They may also be asked to lead discussion sessions or in any case to participate actively in discussion sessions or sections. TAs may also be asked to help prepare materials for use in class and to meet with students about report and paper topics and to discuss and provide feedback on work in progress. Proctors have assembled the journal TDR (*The Drama Review*) and have assisted in the Literary Management Department at Trinity Rep and spearheaded conference planning, including the annual conference of Performance Studies International.

Advising faculty, in consideration of a student's strengths, needs, and specific areas of interest, work with each student to determine a student's course of study. The graduate program is highly selective and that means the ratio of graduate student to faculty favors student access to faculty—a strength that cannot be underestimated. The program offers opportunities for pedagogical development as well. Doctoral students may lecture in theatre history and theory in MFA Acting and Directing courses as well as assume undergraduate teaching or other duties within the Department. Some opportunities include teaching assistantships in Theatre Arts and Performance Studies departmental courses, participation in the flourishing Speech program in the Department under the guidance of Barbara Tannenbaum, or the teaching of courses in a student's area of specialty. Of course, a Brown graduate student need not teach every semester, and Brown does not take advantage of graduate students by relying on them as teachers. Brown protects its stellar undergraduate reputation by insuring that undergraduate education remains an extremely high priority and therefore, unlike other schools, Brown does not indiscriminately take

advantage of graduate students in the classroom. This results in a win-win situation for grads and undergrads alike. Though a grad student is not overburdened with teaching, the Department requires that each student gain experience in pedagogy. Brown's Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning offers many opportunities for graduate advancement in pedagogy, as do teaching opportunities within the Theatre Arts and Performance Studies Department itself. Specific teaching assistantships will be determined in consultation with a student's committee.

The graduate field of Theatre and Performance Studies includes faculty members from Theatre Arts and Performance Studies as well as field faculty from Anthropology, Africana Studies, Music, English, Literary Arts, Comparative Literature, Italian, Classics, and Modern Culture and Media. Indeed, and in some distinction from other programs, students are encouraged to take advantage of courses across the university, meaning that the diversity of opportunities at Brown can be folded into a program of study. Exciting programs unique to Brown include the opportunity to earn a Master's Degree in a separate field in addition to the PhD by being awarded an extra year of funding through the Open Graduate Education program, which is open to all graduate students. We have had students earn additional Masters Degrees in Anthropology, History, and Philosophy through this competitive program, and students from other departments have joined us as well. The number of doctoral candidates in Theatre and Performance Studies on the Brown campus will range between ten and sixteen at any given time. Graduate seminars are small and there is ample opportunity, in and out of classes, for exchange among graduate students and faculty.

Students in our program have won significant awards in the field and served as graduate leaders in national and international conference organizations. Those graduating with PhDs in Theatre and Performance Studies from Brown can expect successful placement in the academy. To date, we have placed everyone coming through our program with either post-docs, visiting assistant professorships, or tenure track lines in reasonable time from graduation. Graduates have placed in one or more of these categories at Colgate, Connecticut College, Florida State University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, New York University, Princeton University, Queen Mary University of London, Simon Frasier University, UCLA, University of Cincinnati, Washington University in St. Louis, Yale University.

2) Graduate Admissions

The program offers a number of options for admission. Students with a BA may apply for one of the following:

- The MA/PhD program: Students accepted to this program do not yet have a Masters in the field and expect to acquire an M.A. in the process of doctoral candidacy at Brown.
- The PhD program: Students who already have an M.A. in Theatre and/or Performance Studies or a related field may apply for the PhD. Students with an MFA may also apply to the PhD, but may be required to complete additional coursework.

For graduate application deadlines please check the Graduate School website. A statement of purpose (also called a personal statement, generally 1-3 pages), an academic writing sample (10-25 pages), and three letters of recommendation are requested with the application. Also requested are complete official transcripts of all work (graduate and undergraduate) in sealed envelopes. GRE verbal reasoning scores are required and are due by the application deadline. All international applicants whose native language is not English must submit an official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score. An undergraduate major in theatre or performance

studies is not required for admission. Applicants who have had little or no academic work in theatre studies may, however, experience initial difficulty with graduate courses that presuppose undergraduate work in theatre or performance studies and may be guided by advisors to acquire the competence in theatre scholarship expected for the PhD.

For questions about the application process (including GRE/TOEFL submission, LORs, transcripts, and other technical questions), please contact the Graduate School directly at Admission_Graduate@brown.edu. **Applications to the PhD and MFA programs are submitted to, and managed through, the Graduate School. Please do not email the Department with technical questions or requests to troubleshoot your online application submission.** You can find detailed instructions about the application process and components here (<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/application-information/application-components-process>). The application FAQ can be found [here](#). The application for all graduate programs at Brown can be found at brown.edu/academics/gradschool/apply. Specific information for the Acting/Directing Auditions and Writing Requirement for Directors can be found at browntrinity.com/programs/admission/.

Inquiries regarding the Doctoral Program should be addressed to Patricia Ybarra, Chair and Director of Graduate Studies in Theatre and Performance Studies, Box 1897, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912; e-mail: Spencer_Golub@brown.edu.

Inquiries regarding the Playwriting MFA Program should be addressed to Christina Anderson, Head of Playwriting, Box 1897, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912; email: taps@brown.edu.

Inquiries regarding the Brown/Trinity MFAs in Acting or Directing (including financial support for Brown/Trinity MFA students) should be addressed to **Jill Jann**, Program Administrator at Trinity Repertory Company, 201 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903; email: jill_jann@brown.edu.

3) Financial Support

Doctoral students are guaranteed five years of full tuition support as well as an admirable stipend and health benefits. The first year is awarded as a Fellowship, meaning that a student does not have any requirements beyond coursework. The second three years are awarded as Teaching Assistantships or Proctorships. The final year is a Dissertation Fellowship. Some elect to take their Dissertation Fellowship in year four. The plan for Fellowships must be vetted with your advisor. The requirement for taking any Fellowship year earlier than year four, including any additional Fellowships awarded separately from the Department, is the successful completion of Comprehensive Exams. Students should plan to live in the Providence area until the completion of Comprehensive Exams. Our aim is to best serve the student, so, within reason, some flexibility is allowed. For example, should a student be awarded an outside grant for study, financial support from Brown can be deferred. If a student is in good standing and still needs time to complete the dissertation after five years, a student may apply for continuing funding. Though that funding is not guaranteed, to date we have had a very healthy record of offering sixth year funding where required.

4) Graduate Requirements

Required Courses for the PhD

Students who do not yet have a Masters in the field and expect to acquire an MA in the process of doctoral candidacy at Brown will complete at least 15 courses to receive the PhD. Two of these may be independent studies. To receive an MA, students should have completed 10 courses, including two semesters of the graduate colloquium taken the first year in the programs as TAPS 2980.

Required Exams and Writing for the PhD

Students who wish to go on to PhD study must pass a qualifying essay exam in the Fall semester of their second year. Upon passing the qualifying assessment a student will progress to the comprehensive exams after completion of coursework. After the comprehensive exams, a dissertation is required to be written and defended through an oral dissertation defense. Each process is described in more detail below.

Students who already have an MA or MFA degree from another institution will work with the Director of Graduate Studies to determine how many of their credits will transfer toward Brown's PhD degree. The maximum number of courses accepted will be seven. This means that students with prior degrees must take at least eight courses at Brown, including the two graduate colloquia in their first year. For the PhD degree, students are required to take the Graduate Seminar (TAPS 2200 series) every semester they are in coursework.

In addition, upon examination of a student's transcript, a student may be asked to take some or all of the three-semester undergraduate Histories of World Theatre course sequence (TAPS 1230, 1240, and 1250) for graduate credit. Other 1000 level undergraduate courses may be taken for graduate credit upon agreement with the instructor and with DGS approval. When graduate students take 1000 level courses for credit, they are expected to complete additional work, as determined by the instructor, that advance the course to graduate level work. These courses count towards the 15 credits for the PhD.

Also required of all graduate students in residence is participation in the Graduate Colloquium series. First year students will receive academic credit for the colloquium by registering for TAPS 2980 Graduate Level Independent Reading and Research with the DGS as instructor; advanced graduate students do not register but are required to attend.

For a list of "milestones" for progress in the Department, go to Milestones under section #12.

5) Elective Courses

Brown's Graduate Faculty offers a full menu of specialty courses currently in the areas of Theatre Drama and Performance of the Americas; European Theatre and Performance Traditions; Non-Western Theatre and Performance; Twentieth-Century Western Theatre and Performance; Russian Theatre and Drama; Revolution as a Work of Art; Mise en Scene; Performance Theory; New Theories for a Baroque Stage; Ethnography and Performance; Feminist, Race-Critical, Queer Theory and Performance; Abstraction and Resistance; Historiography, Political Theatre and Performance, Neoliberalism and Performance; Studies in Liveness and New Materialism; Archive Culture; Labor and Theatricality; Subjects and Objects: Evidence as Metaphor and Constraint; Wittgenstein, Writing and Performance; and Performance Art and Everyday Life. Our Department also offers courses in Dance Studies and practical courses in theatre and design that some of our graduate students have found to be quite useful. These courses offer different methodologies and discourses as well as variety in subject matter. In addition, our diverse field faculty offer courses in Playwriting, Music, Africana Studies, English, Literary Arts, Comparative Literature, Classics, Anthropology, Modern Culture and Media, etc. There are many other relevant courses involving film studies, digital media studies, literary theory and genre studies, religion and ritualistic performance, art history and representation, cultural studies and political discourse, and gender and identity politics,

many of which are cross-listed and some team-taught through two departments, indicating the openness to academic border-crossing and resource-sharing that is the norm at Brown. Students may choose to audit an elective course, or, depending on the professor, may be allowed to attend without registering by vagabonding. Brown's "shopping period" (the period during which you can add a course without incurring a fee) allows students to sit in on several different courses before deciding upon a final course schedule for the semester.

6) Graduate Colloquia

In addition to a number of public lectures that are open to all Brown students as well as to the Providence community, the graduate faculty of the Department convenes a series of colloquia per academic year that are specifically designed to inform and engage our graduate students.

Speakers are invited from a list that is drawn up by the graduate faculty and the graduate students to reflect students' research interests. We often host scholars at the forefront of scholarship so that graduate students are exposed to the newest and best that performance scholarship has to offer and so that students have a chance to establish personal contacts with persons influential in the field. Past guests have included Herbert Blau, Robin Bernstein, Jennifer Devere Brody, Rey Chow, Tracy Davis, Elin Diamond, Jody Enders, Martin Harries, Adrian Heathfield, Shannon Jackson, Branislav Jakovljevic, Amelia Jones, Michal Kobialka, Andre Lepecki, Eric Lott, Erin Manning, Fred Moten, Jose Munoz, Timothy Murray, Ann Pellegrini, Nicholas Ridout, Joseph Roach, Nicholas Salvato, Karen Shimakawa, Diana Taylor, Alanna Thain, and Roberto Varea.

Brown Professors from the Department and the Field Faculty also present their recent work. In addition, the colloquium sponsors "key text" sessions specially designed for incoming graduate students, as well as workshops on professional development, where faculty coach students in "how to" write proposals, abstracts, conference papers, resumes, job letters, etc. Each year's schedule is accessible via the department's website (brown.edu/taps).

7) Foreign Language Requirements

The Doctoral Program requires that PhD candidates satisfy the requirement for reading comprehension in two foreign languages, or satisfy a requirement for research proficiency in one foreign language. Both languages should be completed before the student can graduate to all-but-dissertation (ABD) status.

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

1. The student can be a native speaker in a language other than English.
2. The student can prove, through a college transcript, an appropriate level of study of a foreign language. The transcript should show that the student has passed a class at the equivalent level to Brown's 40-level (advanced-intermediate) foreign language courses.
3. The student can take and pass one of Brown's "Reading" classes, such as "Reading for German," or "Reading for French." These classes are generally offered during the summer.
4. The student can pass a placement exam delivered by the Brown Language Lab. The placement exam used by the lab tests reading, vocabulary, and grammar (rather than listening/speaking). The score of the test should be 474 or higher.

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

1. The student may be a native speaker in a language other than English.
2. The student may write a paper in English using multiple primary and secondary sources in the foreign language (cited in the text in the foreign language and translated by the student into English as well). The student must also take a placement test at the Brown Language Lab and score 474 or higher.
3. The student may pass a placement test delivered by the Brown Language Lab with a score of 474 or higher. The student will also pass a 50 level course in language and literature, taught in the foreign language.
4. After passing or being exempted from a 50 level course in language and literature, the student may pass a course at the 100 level or higher, conducted in a language other than English.

8) Qualifying Assessment

A Qualifying Assessment takes place at the completion of every student's third semester, regardless of whether a student entered with a Masters Degree or without. The assessment consists of submission of the student's Brown transcript to date (including second semester Fall grades) as well as one essay of the student's choice, written while at Brown and preferably, but not necessarily, chosen from a class or independent study taken within the department. The essay submitted should demonstrate the best of the student's efforts in graduate school to date. Four copies of this material should be submitted by November 15 (assuming all students entered in the Fall and took no leaves of absence) to the DGS. The core graduate faculty will meet to assess each student's progress in the department and evaluate whether or not a student should proceed to the comprehensive exams. In the rare circumstance that a student should not proceed, that student will be awarded an MA degree upon the completion of ten courses but will not progress toward Doctoral study at Brown.

9) Selecting a Committee

At some point during the second year of study (and occasionally earlier) a student selects a chair as the first step toward selecting a committee of three to oversee the process through the comprehensive exams and the dissertation defense. A student does not have to have selected a chair prior to the Qualifying Assessment, though a student may have done so. To select a chair, a student asks a member of the core graduate faculty to serve in this function. The selection of the chair is largely at the discretion of the student, though often the student discusses potential choices with the Director of Graduate Studies who serves as the student's chair until a formal selection is made. A faculty member need not accept a student's request and students should select carefully based on concordance of scholarly experience and interest. It is best to have taken at least one class with a professor before asking them to chair, though this is not always possible. The chair shepherds the student through the process of comprehensive exams and, ultimately, the dissertation, acting as the student's advisor and advocate. Once a student has a chair, and at the time that s/he begins preparing for the comprehensive exams, the student can select (working with the chair and with the chair's discretion) members from the faculty who will constitute the student's Special Committee. The student selects the broader committee together with his or her chair, with an eye toward the requirements of the comprehensive exams and the student's (and faculty's) areas of expertise. A committee is composed of three to four faculty. The committee consists of the chair and two or three other professors. At least two members of the committee must be from the core graduate faculty but others may be selected from either inside or outside the University on approval (or insistence) of the Director of Graduate Studies. After the comprehensive exams, if a student needs to alter the committee to accommodate the dissertation, the committee may be amended. When possible, it is best to select a committee that can serve throughout the comprehensive exam and dissertation process. However, we are flexible, and understand that processes are vital and lively and can indeed alter during a course of study.

10) Comprehensive Exams

In order to qualify for doctoral candidacy, the Dissertation Fellowship, and to be eligible for Departmental approval to take any additional Fellowships awarded by programs such as the Open Graduate Education program, a student will take Comprehensive Exams. Generally, the exams are taken three to six months after the completion of course work, and conversation about the exams should begin with the committee chair before the last semester of coursework. The exams consist of one general exam on theatre and performance history and three specialized essay exams based on reading lists prepared by the student and augmented and approved by the student's committee to reflect areas of scholarly interest. The preparation of these lists requires regular on campus meetings with committee faculty and should be allotted at least three months in preparation (often undertaken in the last semester of coursework).

The general theatre history exam material is drawn from the undergraduate theatre history sequence. This exam is a short, identification test consisting of fifty identification prompts. To pass, a student needs to identify 75% of the prompts correctly and exams will be tailored to each student. This exam can be taken at any time, but must be completed before the oral defense.

The three specialized essay exams are based on reading lists prepared by the student and augmented and approved by the student's committee to reflect areas of scholarly interest. These lists will be prefaced by a descriptive statement on the area of the study and the focus of inquiry, and may be accompanied by a set of questions that the student will prepare to address. Once the lists are approved, the student will commence study. Students should allow at least three months for study of the lists before the exam itself. When the student is ready to take the exam, the committee will construct one question for each list area, and the student will write an essay in response to that question. It is advisable that discussions about the comprehensive exams begin with the student's chair at least six months in advance of the projected exam date because of the time it takes to form the appropriate committee for the specialized areas of study, then to adequately develop appropriate bibliographic lists representative of the areas of study, to have the lists approved, and to study those lists in preparation for the exams. The written exams are passed in to the committee and then defended.

11) Dissertation

Upon passing the comprehensive exams, a scholarly dissertation is required. The dissertation, formatted in either Chicago or MLA style, will be subject to an oral defense. The Graduate School's guidelines for dissertations can be found here: <https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/dissertation-guidelines>. For final touches, see the library link on thesis binding here: library.brown.edu/forgs/thesisbinding_gs.php.

12) Milestones for Doctoral Study in Theatre and Performance Studies

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

For students entering with a BA only:

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

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

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

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

Year Five: Dissertation underway, Participation in grad colloquia.

For students entering with accepted Masters equivalency:

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

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

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

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

Year Five: Dissertation writing. Participation in grad colloquia.

13) Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Degree Completion:

- What is the best schedule for completion of the degree? Or, What are “milestones” for progress?
- What are comprehensive exams? What is expected at a comprehensive exam defense?
- Dissertations:
 - Is a dissertation proposal recommended or required?
 - What is the role of the committee at the dissertation stage?
 - How long is a dissertation?
 - What is expected at a dissertation defense?
 - What is a reasonable time-line from comps to dissertation proposal to completion?

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

What is the best schedule for completion of the degree? Or, What are “milestones” for progress?

Look at the “milestones” section above for the answer to this question. The milestones are markers to help someone complete in five years. For some, this makes for a very tight schedule. However, we strive to help students finish and earn their degrees in as timely a manner as possible.

What are comprehensive exams? This question is fairly thoroughly answered under Graduate Requirements above. If you have further questions, please contact your advisor.

What is expected at a comprehensive exam defense? A comprehensive exam defense is an oral defense of your exams. The exam generally runs between 1.5-2 hours. Chairs of committees design the defense, and thus each defense may vary somewhat. A common defense style is as follows: Everyone gathers. The student is asked to step outside. The committee discusses format and major issues in the essays while the candidate is not in the room (this often takes only a short period of time). The student then reenters and presents for about ten minutes. Some students discuss the process of writing; some offer a self-evaluation of the argument or a self-assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of individual essays; some address what questions remain. Each student should discuss the opening presentation in advance with his or her advisor. After this, each of the three essays is addressed. The committee poses questions to the student, who answers. Sometimes, all talk together about the issues raised. At the end of the defense, the student will leave the room and the committee will deliberate for a short period of time on the status of the candidate. If a candidate passes, a brief discussion may ensue regarding the candidate’s plan for a dissertation.

Dissertations

- **Is a dissertation proposal recommended or required?**

After a student completes his or her comprehensive exams, it is time to research and write the dissertation. Students come to this process in different ways, as do the advisors who chair their committees. Some advisors will require a full dissertation proposal with chapter breakdowns and bibliographies, others will ask for a two to five page précis and/or outline and preliminary bibliography. Still others may be content with an abstract and a plan for research and writing. Please be sure to work closely with your advisor to determine the best route for you in moving into the dissertation research and writing phase.

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

A committee is composed of faculty members who will ultimately determine whether or not a dissertation can be passed. As you research and write, you and your advisor should determine the right time to present work in the form of chapters to your committee members for their feedback. Even before chapters are completed, it is a good idea to visit your committee members in office hours or by special appointment to report on your progress and get their advice on questions you may have in their area of expertise. It is not a good idea to leave communication with committee members until the very end of the process when you have a completed draft, as you should gain insight from your committee along the way. However, you do not want to over-burden your full committee with drafts unnecessarily. Again, work with your advisor to determine how much and when to present drafted work to your committee. A note: please be sure to allow for four to six weeks turn around time. Professors are often extremely busy, and you cannot expect to give a

committee member a chapter and have feedback that same week (though of course, that would be ideal!). You will also want to leave four to six weeks for review of an entire dissertation. However, real world deadlines (job awards or post-doctoral fellowships) often cramp the time allotment. Faculty will generally try and be generous about this, but please be courteous in return. Planning is imperative, as is close communication with your committee throughout the process.

- **How long is a dissertation?**

Dissertation length varies. Generally, dissertations are between 200 and 300 pages in length.

- **What is expected at a dissertation defense?**

A dissertation defense is generally two to three hours long. Chairs of committees design the defense, so each defense may vary. A common defense style is as follows. Everyone gathers. The student is asked to step outside. The committee discusses format and major issues while the candidate is not in the room (this often takes only a short period of time). The student then reenters and presents for about ten minutes. Some students discuss the process of writing; some offer a self-evaluation of the argument or a self-assessment of the dissertation's strengths and weaknesses; some address what questions remain. Each student should discuss the opening presentation in advance with his or her advisor. After this, the committee poses questions to the student, who answers. At the end of the defense, the student will leave the room and the committee will deliberate. In most cases, the student will hear after this deliberation whether or not he or she has passed and will be awarded with the PhD, or whether the pass is provisional based on required revisions, or whether the student has not passed (though this last is extremely unlikely given that no defense should happen before a dissertation is basically defensible).

- **What is a reasonable time-line from comps to dissertation proposal to completion?**

Of course, student processes vary. A goal should be to produce a proposal (in whatever form is determined with an advisor) as soon as possible after the comps—ideally within eight weeks. Ideally, as well, research can be completed in one year, and writing in another year. Many students take longer than this, making it difficult to give a simple answer about “reasonable” expectations. Ideal expectations are one thing, but “reasonable” expectations will vary from topic to topic, as well as from student to student. Every student should try to complete the program within the five years of guaranteed funding, but given the difficulty of this in some cases, it is wise to look for outside funding whenever possible (Brown funding can be deferred if outside funding is secured). There is also the possibility of applying for sixth year funding from Brown.

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

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

14) Frequently Asked Questions about TAPS in General:

- Who provides administrative support for the program?
- What are the program facilities and services?
- How does the department communicate (email, etc)?
- How are Graduate Students represented in/to the Department?
- What if I have a Grievance?
- What if I have a Change in Status?
- What is the Exchange Scholar Program?
- Is there anything the Graduate School needs me to do once I get to campus?
- Can I get mail at the department?
- What about parking? Or housing?
- What about other services are available to me on campus?

Who provides administrative support for the doctoral program?

- **Staff**

The two members of the TAPS administrative staff you should get to know immediately are: **Jamie Tyrol**, Department Manager (jamie_tyrol@brown.edu, 401-863-6718) and **Beth Moloney**, Academic Coordinator (elizabeth_moloney@brown.edu, 401-863- 3283). Their office, Lyman 106, is the main hub of the Department. They know a lot about the bureaucratic niceties of being a graduate student during your years here and can answer most of your practical questions, including those about payroll, registration, reimbursements, IDs, photocopying, mail, keys, etc.

- **The Director of Graduate Studies**

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

What are the program facilities and services?

- **Faculty and Graduate Offices**

Faculty offices are primarily located on the second Floor and Basement Floor of Lyman Hall. The Department's Administrative Office is on the first floor, in room 106. The Department Chair's Office is also on the first floor, inside the main office. Students serving as TAs will have access to Lyman 009 and have priority for the use of that room as a space to hold office hours and related tasks. It will be important for all users to coordinate schedules in making equitable use of the room. Office hours should be reported to Beth Moloney as soon as possible and posted

outside the door to alert your students to your schedule and to avoid double booking of the room. If double booking occurs, please tell Beth as soon as possible. TAs for TAPS 0030 will not be given access to Lyman 002 (“the Cave”) for office hours. If you need keys to 009, please contact the Facilities and Events Coordinator, Chris Redihan (chris_redihan@brown.edu 401-863-6951). For more information about our facilities, please see our website.

- **Graduate Lounge**

The grad lounge is located in Lyman 213. You will be assigned an individual mailbox there. Only grads, faculty, and staff have key access to the lounge, so any deliveries or notes/papers from undergraduate students should be left in the general graduate student mailbox in the main office. Mail is delivered from the general mailbox to personal boxes once daily by one of the graduate students. It contains computers and a printer, as well as a small refrigerator. There is also a telephone (401-863-3272). Please note it has no outgoing long distance or voicemail capability, but can be used to receive calls, call on-campus or to make local calls. Students are expected to furnish their own supplies for their coursework and/or personal communications. Personal and research needs do not receive administrative support such as typing, copying etc. Please report any technical problems with the computers in the grad lounge to our IT person, Eric Scantlebury (eric_scantlebury@brown.edu). Be aware that IT does not provide support for privately owned computers or mobile devices. If the printer in the grad lounge is out of ink, please let Beth know as soon as possible.

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

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

- **Libraries**

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

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

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

The Performing Arts Librarian is Laura Stokes. Based in Orwig Music Library, she works on collections and research in subjects covered by TAPS and the Music Department. She maintains the [Performing Arts guide](#) (which includes links to the Routledge Performance Archive and

Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive collection, among others). If you have items you would like the library to purchase, or if you would like to have a library consultation on a project, please let her know. Her office is Orwig 108. The best way to reach her is via email (laura_stokes@brown.edu).

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

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

How does TAPS communicate?

- **Email**

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

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

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

- **Listserves**

There are several Department email listservs/newsletters that you will be automatically subscribed to when you activate your Brown email address. Subscription to **TAPSGRAD** is restricted to Brown TAPS grad students (MFAs and PhDs), grad faculty and associated artists.

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

How are Graduate Students represented in/to the department?

- **Graduate Liaison to the Faculty** – This person attends most faculty meetings as the representative of the interests of the graduate students at TAPS and in communication with the DGS. This position normally rotates annually among the graduate students, and is elected by the graduate students.
- **Graduate Student Files** – The Department maintains a file for every graduate student. Your file is a record of your graduate career at Brown that is used to help the faculty assess your progress and to establish internal rankings (see below). Most internal documentation (such as funding awards from the Graduate School or Department, the passage of language exams, etc.) will be entered into your file for you. You have the right to view your file, and you have the right to submit documentation to your file. It is in your best interest to make sure that all of your achievements are documented. For example, if you receive an external grant or honor, you should submit a copy of the award letter to your file via Beth Moloney.

Graduate Student Ranking – It is important for students to receive feedback on their performance in the program and candid evaluations of their progress toward their degrees. At the end of every semester, the faculty meets as a group to discuss each student’s performance and participation in courses, their performance as a TA or proctor, and, when appropriate, their completion of program requirements and progress on the dissertation. During this faculty meeting each student is ranked according to the Graduate School’s status rankings of “good,” “satisfactory,” or “warning.” Areas needing improvement are identified and concerns are voiced. Students receive these evaluations as part of the written reports from the DGS at the end of each semester, and are encouraged to use them as an occasion for checking in with their advisor and the DGS about what the program’s expectations are, and how best to meet them. Your rank in the program has a direct impact on your funding. Graduate School funding guarantees are contingent upon maintenance of good academic standing in the program.

What if I have a grievance?

Students having trouble with a faculty member should consult the DGS. The Graduate School has adopted a university-wide grievance procedure, to which you may turn if these less formal and local measures fail. These procedures are available here (<https://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/grievance-procedures>). If you want to discuss your situation with someone outside the department, contact the Dean of the Graduate School or the Ombudsperson. Note that the DGS is considered, by Title IX, a “responsible employee.” If matters of potential sexual harassment or abuse are brought to the DGS’s attention, he/she is legally bound to report them. The DGS can direct you to confidential interlocutors if you prefer.

If one of your students complains about your teaching and you cannot resolve the problem yourself, you should consult with the course supervisor or faculty evaluator. If the issue cannot be resolved at that point, you should take the matter to the DGS. In cases where there is some disagreement between you and the faculty member or between either and the DGS, the Chair will review the evidence, discuss the matter with everyone involved, and report his or her conclusions in writing to you. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of this process, you are always free to pursue the Graduate School's grievance procedures.

What if I have a change in status?

Any changes in a student's status (leave of absence, withdrawals, part-time, changes in degree program) should be sent in writing to the DGS. The DGS in turn submits notification of any change to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs of the Graduate School. For more on leaves and other status changes please consult the Graduate School handbook. Material about readmission after a leave (including childbirth accommodation, family leave of absence, personal leave and medical leave) can be found there as well.

What is the Exchange Scholar Program?

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

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

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

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

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

Can I get mail at the department?

The Department mailing address is: Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies, Box 1897, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912. The physical address of Lyman Hall is 83 Waterman Street, Providence RI 02912. All mail sent to the Department goes first to the general graduate mailbox in the main office. It is delivered to graduate students' mailboxes in the grad student lounge by whichever graduate student checks the mail first on any given day. All regular mail (USPS) should be sent to (your name) at Box 1897, although your routine "domestic" mail (bills, correspondence, and personal packages) should be sent to your home address whenever possible. The mailroom refers to both department and box numbers when sorting mail. Therefore, the use of a complete address is recommended. Packages from other courier services (i.e., UPS, Fedex) may be sent to (your name) at the Waterman Street address. It's a good idea to give either Jamie or Beth a heads up if you are having a package delivered, but we recommend you use this option only when necessary as we have a limited amount of space in the office for storage of packages.

What about parking? Or housing?

- **Parking**

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

- **Housing**

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

What other campus resources are available to me?

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