

BROWN UNIVERSITY

**DEPARTMENT OF
PORTUGUESE
AND BRAZILIAN STUDIES**

**A HANDBOOK FOR
GRADUATE STUDENTS**

GENERAL SCOPE OF THIS HANDBOOK
(rev. November 2025)

This handbook is a resource for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies graduate students, faculty, and prospective graduate students. It describes departmental procedures and helps students chart their program of study. The handbook should be used in conjunction with other resources at Brown, such as the [Graduate School website](#) and especially its [Rules and Regulations pages](#). University-wide deadlines for paperwork pertaining to graduate students varies from year to year and are not set by the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies (hereafter POBS). Please remember that these are only guidelines. Individual cases may warrant individual solutions; we reserve the right to maintain a degree of flexibility in many of these matters as long as fairness is upheld. It is also important to note that these guidelines are in no way intended to replace direct communication with the Chair, Director of Graduate Studies (hereafter DGS), and third-year project or dissertation advisor.

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POBS offers interdisciplinary degree programs, from the bachelor's to the doctoral level, with an emphasis on language, literature, history, and the social sciences. The department's programs highlight both the global nature of the Portuguese-speaking world and its specific geographical areas: Continental and Insular Portugal, Brazil, Lusophone Africa, and the Portuguese-American communities. Both undergraduate and graduate students are able to work with a distinguished faculty equally committed to research and teaching, and to take advantage of the extensive resources at the Rockefeller, John Hay and John Carter Brown libraries.

In addition to offering academic programs in Portuguese language, Portuguese, Brazilian and Lusophone African Literature, History and Culture, POBS extends its resources beyond the immediate university community by organizing a varied program of cultural events, including lectures, concerts and symposia. Exchanges with Brazilian and Portuguese universities, and the publication of books and six scholarly journals exemplify the Department's broader social and educational contributions.

For more information, please visit the homepage:
[Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies.](#)

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GRADUATE PROGRAM

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PORTUGUESE AND BRAZILIAN STUDIES

The Ph.D. Program in Portuguese and Brazilian centers on advanced graduate study in the language, literatures and cultures of the Portuguese-speaking world, with concentrations in one or more of the following areas: Continental and Insular Portugal, Brazil, Lusophone Africa, and Luso-America. Students take advantage of the diverse expertise of the Department's faculty, which embraces specializations in Literature, Language, Philosophy, Comparative Literature, and History. Students are also encouraged to pursue complementary certificate opportunities (see below *Cross-disciplinary Opportunities*).

In training our doctoral students to become effective scholars, teachers, and educational leaders, the Department is committed to instilling and maintaining a practice of diversity, equity and inclusion, globally conceived. The Department is responsive to differences as they pertain to gender, race, ethnic and national origin, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and economic background.

Specific Requirements for the Doctoral Program

It is the students' responsibility to become knowledgeable about the policies and requirements of our doctoral program as well as the Graduate School. It is also essential that students respect and abide by the Brown Academic Code.

Coursework

1. Students will complete a minimum of **sixteen courses**, one of which may be an independent study. Exceptions need to be approved by the voting faculty. Graduate students in the coursework stage must secure **approval from the DGS** for course selection prior to registration for each semester. Only approved courses will count towards degree.

2. At least fourteen of the minimum sixteen courses should be taught by POBS's faculty, with primary listings in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies as well as in related departments such as Africana Studies, Comparative Literature, History, etc. that are cross listed in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and meet a minimum 40% Lusophone course content threshold. In addition, for such courses to count toward these 14 courses the final project must focus on the Lusophone world.

3. Students will complete a minimum of **six seminars in POBS**. These seminars may not be replaced by independent studies nor courses from other departments.

- One 2000-level course focusing entirely or in part on Brazilian literature before 1900
- One 2000-level course focusing entirely or in part on Portuguese literature before 1900
- One 2000-level course focusing on Lusophone African literature/culture

- One 2000-level course focusing entirely or in part on post-1900 Portuguese literature/culture
- One 2000-course focusing entirely or in part on post-1900 Brazilian literature/culture
- One 1000 or above course focusing on Lusophone history/culture.

4. Only 1000 level courses with primary listings in POBS or taught by faculty with primary affiliation in POBS can be counted toward the sixteen required courses. A maximum of two 1000 level courses will normally be approved except in exceptional circumstances.

5. First-year students have no teaching responsibilities and enroll in four courses each semester, they also take a **language pedagogy**, normally in the spring semester, such as CLS 2900 Pedagogy or an equivalent, **which counts toward the requirement to take 14 courses in POBS**. Second-year students enroll in three courses each semester. In the third year students must take a total of two courses, whose distribution varies.

6. Students should understand that sixteen is only the minimum REQUIRED number of courses. Students are free to take or audit additional courses and to enroll in additional independent studies both in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and in other departments beyond the sixteen-course minimum.

7. **Transfer of Credits and Residence Requirement:** Doctoral students with a relevant Master's Degree from another institution may request transfer of up to **two courses**. Applications should be filed after one semester at Brown (forms available at the Registrar). Transferred credits may adjust milestone timelines (e.g., major paper and book review could move from the third to the second year). Reduction of residence does not affect the total number of courses for credit.

Academic Standing and Assessment

1. Explanation of Academic Standing:

“Good”: Student is completing coursework and making timely progress on program benchmarks (3rd year: general exam, book review and major paper; 4th year: dissertation colloquium, language requirement; 5th year: at least one chapter of the dissertation completed and approved by dissertation advisor; 6th year: progress toward completion of dissertation).

“Satisfactory”: Student has taken required number of courses, carries no more than one incomplete for the current semester, and has met program benchmarks in line with the semester of enrollment, but has encountered difficulties on the way. These may include: weak or inadequate course and teaching performance reviews or slow progress on benchmarks (such as completing benchmarks after expected dates) or in coursework (e.g. carrying an incomplete in any given semester or dropping a course).

“Warning”: Student is delayed or has not fulfilled the milestone requirements according to the timeline delineated for the corresponding academic year; receives two or more B grades;

holds more than one “Incomplete” in the most recent semester; carries forward one (or more) “Incomplete(s)” from previous semester(s). *For implications regarding “Warning Status,” please consult Brown’s Graduate School Handbook.*

2. Faculty members are committed to providing students with comments on their written work in a timely manner, and to discuss these comments with the students individually upon request.

3. Academic Progress Report: At the end of each academic year (typically in May), students will be asked to report on their academic activities for that year, set goals for the summer and the following year, and update their *Academic Benchmarks Checklist* (a Google Drive document shared between each student and the DGS).

4. Summer: Students receive summer funding throughout their graduate career at Brown. This funding is intended to support their academic progress, from preparing for yearly benchmarks to advancing research and scholarly projects. Students should record their goals and the work completed during the academic year and summer in their *Academic Progress Proposal* and in their *Academic Benchmark Checklist*. Please note that students are expected to maintain professional communication with the department during the summer, particularly regarding time-sensitive matters.

5. Deviations from these guidelines should be requested in writing and require approval by the Department’s voting faculty.

General Examination

The general exams take place **at the beginning of the third year**. They take place over two days, for three hours a day. Students will answer a total of six questions. Students answer three questions each day (one day in English and one day in Portuguese).

All students will take the General Examination on the **Tuesday and Wednesday of the week previous to the start of the Fall term** (normally the week before Labor Day). The DGS will confirm the exact date of the exam at the end of the student’s second academic year. **This exam will only be offered once per academic year.** No make up or alternative exam dates will be offered.

In answering the General Examination questions, students are expected to demonstrate command of the entire reading list, showing not only familiarity with the works but also the ability to apply analytical and critical skills to literary and cultural texts.

Exam results will be communicated to the graduate student in writing by the DGS within two weeks after the examination is completed.

If one or two questions of the written examination are deemed less than satisfactory, an oral examination will be scheduled within approximately two weeks after the DGS has communicated the exam results to the student.

The oral exam will be moderated by the DGS or the Chair and include the faculty. The student will be given 10–15 minutes to elaborate on and correct the problematic answers in an oral presentation. Faculty may then ask further questions on the question itself or on larger issues related to it. If the student's response is still deemed unsatisfactory or if the student does not obtain a satisfactory result in more than two areas of the exam, the student may either be asked to repeat the whole exam at the next available date, or they will be withdrawn from the program.

Reading List

Portugal

Lírica Galaico-Portuguesa (Seleção de poemas)
Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Crónica dos feitos da Guiné*
Gil Vicente, *Auto da Índia*
Luís de Camões, *Os Lusíadas*
Antero de Quental, *Sonetos*
Ana Plácido, *Herança de Lágrimas*
Camilo Castelo Branco, *Amor de Perdição*
Eça de Queirós, *Os Maias*
Fernando Pessoa, *Seleção de Poemas* (Poesia ortônima, including *Mensagem*, and the heteronymous poetry by Alberto Caeiro, Ricardo Reis and Álvaro de Campos)
Vitorino Nemésio, *Mau Tempo no Canal*
Vergílio Ferreira, *Aparição*
M. I. Barreno, T. Horta e M. V. Costa, *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*
José Saramago, *Memorial do Convento*
Lídia Jorge, *A Costa dos Murmúrios*
António Lobo Antunes, *O Esplendor de Portugal*
Hélia Correia, *Contos*
Sophia de Mello Breyner, *Livro Sexto*
António Sérgio, *Breve Interpretação da História de Portugal*

Africa

José Eduardo Agualusa, *Nação Crioula*
Pepetela, *A Geração da Utopia*
Mia Couto, *Terra Sonâmbula*
Paulina Chiziane, *Niketche*
Baltazar Lopes, *Chiquinho*
Orlanda Amarilis, *Cais-do-Sodré té Salamansa*
Abdulai Sila, *A Última Tragédia*
Luís Cardoso, *Crónica de uma Travessia*
Patrick Chabal, *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*
[Antologia de Poesia de Mulheres Africanas](#)
Amílcar Cabral, *Textos políticos*

Brazil

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, *Raízes do Brasil*
Gilberto Freyre, *Casa-Grande & Senzala*
Alfredo Bosi, *Dialética da Colonização*
Thomas Skidmore, *Black into White: Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*
Paulo Freire, *Educação como Prática de Liberdade*
Maria Firmina dos Reis, *Úrsula*

José de Alencar, *Iracema*
 Machado de Assis, *Dom Casmurro*
 Aluísio Azevedo, *O Cortiço*
 Euclides da Cunha, *Os Sertões*
 Lima Barreto, *Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma*
 Mário de Andrade, *Macunaíma*
 Raquel de Queiroz, *As Três Marias*
 Graciliano Ramos, *Vidas Secas*
 Carlos Drummond de Andrade, *Antologia Poética*
 João Cabral de Melo Neto, *Os Melhores Poemas*
 Clarice Lispector, *A Paixão Segundo G.H.* [L]
 João Guimarães Rosa, *Grande Sertão: Veredas* [SEP]
 Conceição Evaristo, *Ponciá Vicêncio*
 Milton Hatoum, *Relato de um Certo Oriente*
 Ana Maria Gonçalves, *Um Defeito de Cor*
 Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert, *A queda do céu*
 Itamar Vieira Júnior, *Torto Arado*

Sample Questions from Past General Examinations

(1) *Os Lusíadas*, de Luís de Camões, e a *Mensagem*, de Fernando Pessoa, têm sido várias vezes objecto de comparação. Ao que parece, o próprio Fernando Pessoa tinha em mente a epopéia nacional portuguesa quando criou a *Mensagem*. Faça uma análise comparativa e crítica das duas obras.

(2) Um dos temas fundamentais da história intelectual e da literatura brasileiras desde meados do século XIX é a *excepcionalidade* do carácter nacional brasileiro, isto é, a ideia de que o brasileiro e suas produções culturais possuem algo de singular em relação a outras culturas e outras nações. Discuta as variações desse tema em *quatro* seguintes livros:
Iracema, *Os Sertões*, *Macunaíma*, *Raízes do Brasil*. *Casa Grande e Senzala* e *Formação da Literatura Brasileira*.

(3) Basing your response on your own reading of the Camonean epic, comment on the following statements made by Silvério Augusto Benedito in his “Introdução” to *Os Lusíadas*:

“Os Lusíadas são um vasto rio para onde confluem e onde se tornam caudal vários aspectos da história viva de Quinhentos: o ideal épico português, a vida cultural renascentista, o real das Descobertas, o ideal da Cristandade, a conflitualidade existencial do poeta (...)”

(4) Discuss the following quote by Graça Aranha and relate its emphasis on subjectivity to the narrative construction of what Antonio Candido calls “self and society” in such works as *Perto do Coração Selvagem* e *Grande Sertão: Veredas*. In other words, how are the narratives of these works so designed as to underscore the representation of subjectivity?

“A arte no Brasil não é a representação da realidade, o espelho divino da vida. É a representação da subjetividade do espírito humano.” [*A Estética da Vida*, 1921]

Third-year project: Major Paper & Book Review

Before the last day of shopping period of the fifth semester , the student in consultation with the DGS must:	1. identify the full third-year committee (advisor + two additional faculty members). At least two members, including the advisor, must be voting POBS faculty; 2. enroll in <i>POBS 2970 - Preliminary Examination Preparation</i> . This course formalizes ongoing work but does not count toward the 16 required courses. The advisor must approve the registration and agree to supervise the benchmark;
By the end of the fifth semester , the student must:	3. complete the book review; 4. submit to DGS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a copy of the approved book review, along with the advisor's written approval for inclusion in the student's file; b) title and abstract of the major paper; tentative timetable for completion;
Sixth semester	5. re-enroll in <i>POBS 2970</i> ; 6. continue developing the major paper following the approved timetable;
By the end of the sixth semester	7. complete the major paper.

Timeline

The third-year project committee will include the advisor and two additional faculty members. The advisor and one additional member of the committee must be voting faculty in POBS. The faculty member who will guide the development of the student's third-year benchmarks, along with the full third-year committee, must be selected in consultation with the DGS.

Book Review: Students will complete an original book review –800 to 1250 words– no later than the end of their fifth semester. The book review should dialogue with the third-year major paper or the developing themes of the dissertation topic/area. Students will prepare the book review under the guidance of their third-year faculty advisor. The final edited book review, ready for submission to an academic journal, must be approved by their third-year advisor before the end of the student's fifth semester.

Major Paper: The major paper is expected to be 8,000–10,000 words in length, inclusive of notes and bibliography. The major paper should be understood as a publishable article that could be extended into a dissertation chapter, a study related to the dissertation, or as a methodological exploration of topics to be examined in the dissertation. The article is not required to be accepted for publication; however, it must be deemed publishable by the committee and appropriate for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, either in the United States or abroad. The article might be based on work previously submitted for a course or spin off from a paper presented at a professional conference. A previously published article will not be considered towards fulfilling

this requirement. The paper should reflect knowledge of the field of study and research of appropriate bibliography. It should dialogue with a community of scholars that previously have worked on the same or related topics or works in order to advance an original and nuanced argument.

The paper should follow recent MLA style unless there is reason to follow another standard format. One copy of the student's committee approved major paper should be given to the student's advisor; another should be given to the department. Failure to complete the major paper to the committee's satisfaction by the end of the student's sixth semester jeopardizes good standing in the program.

Consideration will be given to the possibility of replacing the article with a contribution to the profession in the area of the digital humanities, or a substantial literary translation (book length). In order for such projects to be considered, the student must submit a petition with a rationale for the project, which will be reviewed and voted on by the faculty.

A public presentation of the third-year project is not required. Instead, third-year students will meet with the members of their committee to discuss their completed projects. Upon completion of the major paper and the book review, students qualify for a transitional Master of Arts degree.

Pre-Dissertation Colloquium

A public oral presentation and discussion of the student's dissertation proposal, open to all faculty and graduate students in the Department, normally to be given within the semester following the completion of the major paper and the book review. The colloquium consists of a twenty-to-thirty-minute presentation by the candidate followed by a discussion with the members of the dissertation committee (see below under "Dissertation"). **Copies of the proposal will be made available to interested faculty members and graduate students at least one week before the scheduled date for the colloquium.** The colloquium should occur by the end of the seventh semester. It is customary for the proposed date for the colloquium to be discussed with the DGS before it is publicly announced.

Funding for the fifth year in the form of a dissertation fellowship is contingent on the student having successfully presented his/her/their pre-dissertation colloquium no later than the seventh semester. Postponing the pre-dissertation colloquium beyond the seventh semester will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances and with a petition submitted earlier that semester, detailing the reason and including a timeline for completion. The proposed postponement will be brought to the full voting faculty for consideration.

The dissertation proposal consists of the following components:

- (1) **Introduction:** Overview of main ideas, hypotheses, objectives, and themes.
- (2) **Contexts:** (a) Theoretical considerations; (b) Comparative or historical/literary treatments of this theme/topic in the context of the Portuguese-speaking world; (c) Research sites and/or archives if applicable.

(3) **Narrative** (10-15 pages): Specifics about the development of the dissertation with a tentative outline of chapters and conclusion; contents of the thesis regarding authors, corpus of texts, materials, and other relevant items; main arguments and relation of these to overall objective.

(4) **Working Bibliography** (approximately 10 pages): Primary and secondary materials, including theory and relevant criticism on specific authors, texts, movements, etc.

Students are encouraged to consult previously approved dissertation proposals, which are available in a Google Drive folder shared with all graduate students (*POBS Graduate Students Shared Docs*).

Following the successful defense of the colloquium paper, students are officially advanced to doctoral candidacy (ABD).

Dissertation

The dissertation is expected to make an original contribution to the field of Lusophone Studies, consistent with the high research and scholarship standards of the department. The dissertation may be written in English or in Portuguese and should normally be at least 200 pages in length. It should conform to standard academic style (objective and clear language, avoidance of colloquialisms). Chapters should generally range from 40 to 60 pages. The final copy of the dissertation must strictly follow the formatting guidelines issued by the Graduate School. For complete information about the rules for the preparation and submission of the final copy of the dissertation, please visit the [Graduate School](#) website.

The dissertation committee consists of three or more faculty members, at least two of whom must hold appointments in POBS, to be chosen by the student in consultation with the DGS. The chair of the dissertation committee must be a faculty member in POBS with knowledge in the area of the dissertation. Graduate students must have taken a minimum of 1 course with a professor before requesting them to be their dissertation advisor. Any exceptions to this must be discussed and approved by the DGS, Chair and proposed dissertation advisor.

Students submit the first draft of each chapter to the dissertation advisor. After initial comments, students usually submit a revised draft of the chapter to each member of their committee unless other arrangements have been jointly made by the student, the dissertation advisor, and a particular reader. It is expected that the advisor and the readers who choose to evaluate chapters as they are completed will return their comments to the students within a reasonable time frame and meet with the students as needed.

The dissertation defense, scheduled at the convenience of the readers, is open to all members of the university community. The department's faculty and graduate students in residence are expected to attend. It consists of a twenty to-thirty-minute presentation by the candidate, followed by a discussion with the members of the candidate's dissertation committee. **A final draft of the dissertation, except for minor corrections and revisions, must be submitted to the full committee at least two weeks before the scheduled date for the defense.** Please consult with

your committee to allow sufficient time for the defense and any edits/copy-edits that must be incorporated to conform to the committee's requests and University submission standards and still meet conferral deadlines. At least one week before the defense, the candidate shall make available the dissertation abstract to faculty and graduate students in the department.

POBS Internal Deadlines

Colloquia and dissertation defenses must occur by the end of the fall final exam period or by the end of the spring final exam period.

It is expected that dissertation defenses will occur during the academic year except under extraordinary circumstances. Exceptions require an application by the candidate and approval by the Chair, DGS, and Dissertation Advisor. Written petitions must be submitted at least six weeks before the scheduled deadline and during the academic year. Each petition should include: the proposed alternate date for the exam, colloquium, or defense, as well as a justification or rationale for the postponement.

Degree Conferral Periods:

- October: for students completing requirements in the preceding summer term.
- February: for students completing requirements in the preceding fall term.
- May: for students completing requirements in the preceding spring term.

For graduate school deadlines, including deadlines to submit theses and dissertations and fellowship deadlines, please consult the [Graduate School Site](#).

Language Requirement

Ph.D. candidates are expected to have achieved native or near-native fluency in Portuguese and English. In addition, candidates should demonstrate proficiency in one additional language during their time at Brown by the end of the fourth year. This requirement can be fulfilled by (a) passing a translation exam; (b) taking two semesters of, typically, beginning to intermediate level courses; one intensive semester-long course; or one advanced seminar (undergraduate or graduate level) for credit; or (c) taking an intensive summer course in the language.

Teaching Requirement

Ph.D. candidates are expected to acquire sound pedagogical skills by participating in the department's teaching-mentoring program. The department expects that doctoral candidates will serve as teaching assistants and/or teaching fellows for a minimum of four semesters. The department will make every effort to provide doctoral students with a variety of teaching opportunities over the course of their careers. Students will attend a Language Pedagogy course in their second semester in residence. (See below *Teaching*)

Typical Sequence of the Ph.D. Candidacy Process

Based on the requirements described above, the expected route toward the Ph.D. normally follows this pattern of landmarks:

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	4 seminars	3 seminars & LANG 2900	Prepare for the GE
Year 2	3 seminars; teach 1 course	3 seminars; teach 1 course	Prepare for the GE & Third Year Project
Year 3	General Examination; 2 seminars; teach 1 course; Third-Year Committee; Book Review	Teach 1 course; Major Paper	Prepare Dissertation Colloquium
Year 4	Teach 1 course; Dissertation Advisor and Readers; Dissertation Title & Abstract	Teach 1 course; Dissertation Colloquium; Fulfill language requirement; Dissertation Fellowship Application	Prepare Dissertation
Year 5	Dissertation writing; No teaching; Job market applications when appropriate	Dissertation writing; No teaching; Dissertation Completion Plan	Advance Dissertation
Year 6	Teach 1 course; Dissertation writing; Job market	Teach 1 course; Dissertation Defense	

Note: Assignments as teaching assistant, teaching fellow or proctor begin in Year 2. Support for the sixth year will generally be in the form of a teaching assistantship or fellowship. (See below *Financial Assistance*).

Assessment of Student Performance

Our department is a community committed to the highest standards in teaching and scholarship in Lusophone Studies, and doctoral students are integral members of this community. Working closely with supportive faculty mentors, students are encouraged to develop the research and pedagogical skills that will prepare them for careers as outstanding teachers and scholars.

When doctoral students first arrive on campus, they meet with the DGS, who explains the doctoral program in detail and guides them in their initial course selection. During their first two years in the program, students are officially assigned as advisees to the DGS, although they are encouraged to cultivate relationships with other faculty members who share their research interests.

Beginning in their third year and throughout the remainder of their progress toward the degree, students work with appropriate faculty committees, who advise them on their third-year project, colloquium, and dissertation. Students are expected to seek and respond to their advisors' input in course selection, preparation for exams and colloquia, research and writing of the dissertation, and other professional matters such as conference participation and job applications.

Advisors, in turn, are expected to demonstrate sustained support and care for their advisees, to meet with them regularly, and to continue advising while on leave. Advisors are also expected to provide letters of recommendation and support as needed; such requests should be made in a timely manner, and last-minute requests should be avoided except in exceptional circumstances.

First-year Ph.D. students receive a written assessment of their performance at the close of their first semester. Continuing students receive an annual written assessment of their scholarly and teaching performance and their progress toward the degree, in accordance with Graduate School regulations. Students receive copies of their Course Performance Reports (CPRs) and Teaching Performance Reports (TPRs) at the end of each semester.

Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally in all aspects of their graduate education, including replying to emails, attending meetings, arriving on time, and participating in the academic and professional life of the department.

Academic Benchmarks Checklist

*This document should be maintained current by the graduate student as this document serves as a live reference document for the department.

16 credits in total

14 credits in POBS or related topics; 1 credit is the Language Pedagogy course; 6 should be 2000-level POBS grad seminars

Required Area Focuses for Graduate Courses

- _____ One 2000-level course focusing entirely or in part on Brazilian literature before 1900
- _____ One 2000-level course focusing entirely or in part on Portuguese literature before 1900
- _____ One 2000-level course focusing on Lusophone African literature/culture
- _____ One 2000-level course focusing entirely or in part on post-1900 Portuguese literature/culture
- _____ One 2000-course focusing entirely or in part on post-1900 Brazilian literature/culture
- _____ One 1000 or above course focusing on Lusophone history/culture.

YEAR 1:

Semester 1:

- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- Course: _____

Semester 2:

- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- LANG 2900: Language Pedagogy & Second Language Acquisition (or approved equivalent)

Summer:

- Progress: _____

YEAR 2:

Semester 3:

- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- Course: _____

Semester 4:

- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- Course: _____

Summer:

- Progress: _____

YEAR 3:

- General Examination (Tuesday and Wednesday of the week previous to the start of the Fall term): _____

Semester 5:

- Course: _____
- Course: _____
- Enroll in POBS 2970 - Preliminary Examination Preparation: _____
- Third-year Benchmarks Faculty Advisor (Last day of shopping period): _____
- Book Review (first-day of the final exam period): _____
- Third-Year Project: Title, Abstract and Committee Members (first-day of the final exam period): _____

Semester 6:

- Enroll in POBS 2970 - Preliminary Examination Preparation: _____
- Submission of Third-Year Project (Final approved copy submitted by the first-day of the final exam period): _____

Summer:

- Progress: _____

YEAR 4:

Semester 7:

- Dissertation Faculty Advisor (Last day of shopping period): _____
- Dissertation Project: Title, Abstract & Committee Members (first-day of the final exam period): _____

Semester 8:

- Pre-Dissertation Colloquium (Must be circulated a minimum of 1 week before scheduled Colloquium date): _____
- Pre-Dissertation Colloquium (Must be completed before first-day of the final exam period)
- Dissertation Fellowship Application Due. Dissertation *Fellowship year dependent on timely completion of Pre-dissertation Colloquium*

Summer:

- Progress: _____

Year 5:

Semester 9-10:

- Preparation of Job Market Materials for preliminary foray into job market when appropriate
- Dissertation Fellowship year

Summer:

- Progress: _____

Year 6:

Semester 11-12

- Job Market Materials submissions
- Dissertation Defense

Teaching

It is the Department's philosophy that teaching and research go hand in hand. Training in pedagogy and actual teaching are fundamental parts of our doctoral program, preparing students for postdoctoral professional life.

As of July 1, 2020, the collective bargaining agreement between the university and the graduate student union has set standard expectations and categories for graduate student teaching activities. Graduate students on stipend carry a maximum of a 20-hour weekly average workload throughout the semester. These hours include class preparation, classroom time, grading, meetings with the course coordinator and other section instructors, course related email communication, and all and all other aspects required of the teaching assignment.

Of the categories outlined in the Graduate School Handbook, POBS uses the following: *Teaching Assistant* (TA); *Teaching Assistant II* (TA II); *Teaching Fellow* (TF); *Proctors*. For more information consult the [collective bargaining agreement](#).

Expectations and Pedagogical Training

Orientation: Students serving as teaching assistants and teaching fellows must participate in orientation programs sponsored by the Center for Language Studies and POBS during the week before the start of the fall and spring semesters (POBS only in the spring). Students should plan their return from summer and winter breaks accordingly. Returning TAs should plan to be on campus one week before the beginning of the semester in the fall and four days before the beginning of the semester in the spring. Missed or delayed travel plans are not an excuse for missing semester participation requirements.

Attendance, Absences, and Professional Conduct: Absences from campus during the work week are not permitted unless for professional (e.g., presenting at a conference) or health-related reasons. Teaching fellows, teaching assistants, and proctors must obtain advance permission from their supervisors for all absences while classes are in session and during the reading and exam periods. When planning summer travel, students should keep in mind that teaching appointments typically run through May.

Responsibilities, Substitutions, and Timeliness for TAs and TFs:

Instructors are expected to:

1. Adhere to the syllabus;
2. Attend regular meetings with the course supervisor and fellow instructors;
3. Provide feedback and grades to students in a timely manner;
4. Ensure that all students are equally prepared for exams and advancement in the program;
5. Avoid missing class except when absolutely necessary;
6. Inform the faculty course coordinator in advance if they must miss class.

End of Semester Availability: TAs are expected to remain on campus until one week after the reading period each semester. If they need to leave before this time, they must: notify the faculty course coordinator; remain reachable by email and telephone until all grades are uploaded to the system.

Teaching related events: At least once a month the Department sponsors an informal gathering of students and faculty at which Portuguese is exclusively spoken. The events are held on Friday afternoons at the George Monteiro Conference Room at Meiklejohn House. At *Bate-papos* coffee, tea, soft drinks and munchies are offered. At the *Pizza e Papos* events pizza and soft drinks are served. All speakers of Portuguese, native and non-native, are welcome. It is part of the TA's obligations to participate in these teaching related events, as well as in the *Performance and Exhibit Night* (PEN) at the end of each semester.

Teaching Mentoring Program Structure: The teaching mentoring program introduces students to pedagogical approaches and a variety of instructional experiences. It includes:

1. An intensive one-day orientation on the Thursday before each academic semester. All TAs must attend and should arrive on campus early enough to avoid unexpected issues.
2. Group and/or individual meetings throughout the semester between TAs/Fellows and the faculty responsible for teacher training. These weekly meetings are crucial for reviewing lesson plans and discussing teaching-related topics. If a TA cannot attend, they must notify the course supervisor at least 24 hours in advance.
3. Classroom observations during the first and second years of teaching provide structured feedback, followed by discussions with the evaluator. Course evaluations also contribute to ongoing assessment.
4. Communication and Grading Expectations
 - a. TAs must respond to emails within 24 hours during the workweek.
 - b. Tests, quizzes, and exams must be graded and returned within 72 hours.
 - c. Papers must be returned within 96 hours.
(Weekends are excluded from these timelines.)
5. Teaching assignments depend on departmental needs, completion of plan-of-study benchmarks, and academic standing.

The following courses have been designated for participation in the teaching mentoring program:

POBS 0105: Accelerated Portuguese – This course serves as an accelerated introduction to Portuguese, one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It is also an introduction to the diverse cultures of Portuguese-speaking societies. Specifically, the course will look into the ethnic, racial, social, and gender diversity in these cultures. Designed for students who have no prior knowledge of Portuguese, POBS 0105 meets five hours per week.

POBS 0280: Mapping Food, Eating Meaning, Making Community: A Welcome to the Lusophone World - In this course we will explore the Lusophone world vis-à-vis the local, regional, and national culinary traditions of Brazil, Portugal, Luso-Africa, and Goa. Through a broad selection of cultural material (music, film, television series, short stories, poems, visual art, etc.) that either directly or indirectly dialogues with the theme of food and cuisine in the Lusophone world, we will survey the many cultures of the Portuguese speaking diaspora.

POBS 0400: Writing and Speaking Portuguese – Designed to improve the student’s ability in contemporary spoken and written Portuguese, using such cultural items as short stories, plays, films, videos, newspaper and magazine articles, and popular music. Method: situational/natural approach.

POBS 0630: Topics in Portuguese-Speaking Cultures – Selected literary and cultural texts that serve as vehicles for a deeper understanding of Portuguese-speaking societies. Literary materials are taken from several genres and periods with special attention to contemporary writings. Other media such as film and music are also included. The topic changes every semester. This course is intended to provide undergraduate students with ample opportunity to strengthen their speaking, reading and writing skills. Classes rely primarily on discussion and intensive student participation.

POBS 1080: Performing Brazil: Language, Theater, Culture - Designed to deepen the students’ understanding of Brazilian culture and society through the performing arts. Students will read a series of plays and respond to them in a variety of ways: in writing, verbally, and through performance. The course will include poetry and music as these can also be performed. Throughout the semester students will also be working on creating their own performance pieces.

POBS 1740: ARTFUL TEACHING

How can we create meaningful experiences for those learning a foreign or second language? What makes the creative arts (art)iculate so powerfully and naturally with foreign and second language acquisition? How do the arts enable students to become aware of surrounding cultures while simultaneously acquiring a new language? This course will explore connections between the arts--visual, literary and performing--and language acquisition in a combined workshop and seminar approach. Readings will include: Sheridan Blau, Augusto Boal, Shirley Brice Heath, Paulo Freire, Jan Mandell, Twyla Tharp, Jeffrey D. Wilhelm and others. Conducted in English.

On a few occasions, advanced graduate students with previous teaching experience have been invited to co-teach other courses, such as POBS 850 (“Comparative Approaches to the Literatures of Brazil and the United States”), COLT 710N (“A Comparative Introduction to the Literatures of the Americas”) and COLT 1810G (“Fiction and History”). However, such opportunities are not guaranteed.

Other Resources: In addition to the training that they receive in the department, students are encouraged to enroll in the [Sheridan Center](#)’s teaching certificate program, which provides pedagogical and professional training in the form of methodologies, approaches and techniques. The Center also offers invaluable help in the preparation of CVs, narrative profiles on teaching philosophy and teaching portfolios.

Participation in the Scholarly Life of the Department

The department sponsors a lively academic and cultural program designed to offer students a diverse range of engagement opportunities and to foster dialogue across campus, with the wider community, and beyond. Maintaining a steady series of events is essential for sustaining the conversations and resources that make this unique programming possible. Students are strongly encouraged to attend, not to meet a numerical requirement, but because participation provides crucial benefits, including networking, strengthening relationships for letters of recommendation, and gaining professional insight into collaborative work. Graduate students are the program's most important ambassadors: their presence helps ensure the continuity of the resources needed to invite outside speakers and supports the long-term vitality of the field. Participation strengthens our community and is a fundamental part of the department's scholarly life.

In addition to participation in departmental events, graduate students are also involved in the broader academic and administrative life of the department. To prepare them for entering the profession, the department includes graduate students, within the limits set by the *Handbook for Academic Administration* and the departmental *Standards and Criteria*, in searches for new positions. A student representative, selected by the students themselves, is invited to attend the monthly departmental meeting, except for executive sessions in which confidential matters are discussed.

From early in their graduate studies, students receive guidance not only on research and the preparation of seminar papers but also on how to develop their work into conference presentations and journal articles. Doctoral students are also offered opportunities to partner with faculty members in research projects, the design of undergraduate courses, the planning of academic conferences and symposia, and the publication of our six scholarly journals: *BRASIL/BRAZIL*, *e-Journal of Portuguese History (e-JPH)*, *Gávea-Brown, Journal of Lusophone Studies (JLS)*, *Pessoa Plural*, and *Portuguese Cultural Studies*.

Financial Assistance

The Graduate School guarantees six years of financial support for doctoral students in good academic standing, who, in the judgment of the department's faculty, are making the expected progress towards the completion of their degree.

Funding may include a combination of Graduate School support, external fellowships or grants, and competitive internal fellowships. Students will be incentivized to pursue external funding through the incentive plan. Students will also have the opportunity to pause their funding clock by taking Advanced Status when prerequisites are met.

Continued support is contingent upon the timely completion of such landmarks as the general examination (fourth semester), the major paper and book review (no later than the end of the sixth semester), the pre-dissertation colloquium (no later than the end of the seventh semester), and the submission of dissertation chapters during the fifth year.

For the first-year financial aid is generally in the form of a university fellowship, covering tuition for eight courses, a monthly stipend and health insurance. Support for the second, third and fourth years is usually in the form of a teaching assistantship, teaching fellowship or a proctorship, covering tuition, a monthly stipend and health insurance. When students serve as Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows or Proctors, they are allowed to enroll in a maximum of three courses per semester.

Since financial support for the fifth year normally consists of a dissertation fellowship, it is essential that students complete their pre-dissertation colloquium no later than the end of their seventh semester. Sixth-year support, which is usually in the form of a teaching assistantship, is contingent upon the submission and approval of dissertation chapters during the fifth year.

With the approval of the DGS, students in their third year and beyond may compete for a limited number of graduate proctorships.

Although we are committed to providing different types of teaching and research opportunities for all students, the assignment of teaching assistants, teaching fellows and proctors must also consider the needs of the department in a given semester.

In addition to academic year fellowships, assistantships and proctorships, the Graduate School guarantees support for four summers during each doctoral student's career at Brown.

The Department encourages and provides guidance for students to apply for outside fellowships either for academic year or summer support.

Students will be eligible for department funding provided they:

- a) Have or are on track to complete program benchmarks on time (1st and 2nd year: coursework; 3rd year: general examination; coursework; book review and major paper; 4th year: dissertation colloquium; 5th year: At least one chapter of the dissertation completed and approved by dissertation advisor; 6th year: Progress toward completion of Dissertation)
- b) Have completed the required coursework and hold no more than one "Incomplete" for no longer than a semester. Students with more than one "Incomplete" or an "Incomplete" for longer than a semester will not be eligible for department funding.

Special Funding Opportunities

Belda Family Research Fellowship

Thanks to the continued generosity of the Belda Family, the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies is now able to offer fellowships to support research trips to Brazil by our doctoral candidates. Priority is given to students who have completed their major paper and book review, and been advanced to candidacy.^[1] Interested students should submit a proposal consisting of a two-page narrative, the dates when they plan to use their fellowship, and a budget by May 15.

Awards are based upon the significance and soundness of the project and its relevance to the student's research. Each student is limited to one Belda fellowship in the course of his/her career.

Past recipients of the Belda Family Research Fellowship are:

2022: Kevin W. Ennis

2019: Jordan B. Jones

2016: Chloe Hill, Patrícia Ferreira, Silvia Cabral Teresa

2015: David Mittelman, Hasan Shahid, Flora Thomson-DeVeaux

2014: Brianna Medeiros

2013: Adi Gold and Benjamin Legg

2012: Thayse L. Lima

2011: Lamonte Aidoo and Isadora Grevan de Carvalho

2010: Luiz C. Prazeres

2009: Sophia Beal and Stephen Bocskay

2008: Rex P. Nielson

Cross-disciplinary Opportunities

One of the hallmarks of Brown University is its strong spirit of cross-campus inquiry and collaboration. We encourage graduate students to take advantage of that spirit and forge intellectual connections with departments, centers, and institutes beyond POBS. You can do so informally by participating in reading groups, attending lectures, etc., or through any of the more formal opportunities described below.

Certificate Programs in Hispanic Studies and Portuguese and Brazilian Studies

Recognizing the strong historical, linguistic, and literary intersections between the Hispanophone and Lusophone worlds, the Departments of Hispanic Studies and Portuguese and Brazilian Studies have reciprocally launched new graduate certificate programs. The certificates offer an avenue for gaining advanced knowledge of literary, cultural, or intellectual movements, genres, and themes in the other field, as well as familiarity with the key scholarly debates and voices that animate it. In addition, students develop competence in academic writing and speaking in the certificate language.

The certificate programs were conceived primarily for students in each other's departments, but students from departments beyond Hispanic Studies and Portuguese and Brazilian Studies are also welcome to apply.

Requirements

- 3 seminars in the certificate program chosen to coherently complement the student's studies in the home department. At least two of the courses should be taken at the 2000-level; at least one of the seminar papers for those courses should be in the certificate language;

- a piece of work (e.g., conference paper, dissertation chapter, Major Paper or published article) in the certificate area;
- participation in a colloquium hosted by the certificate program.

Application

Students typically should apply for the certificate program by the end of their second year at Brown. In order to be considered for admission, they must have a minimum of intermediate proficiency in the certificate language as determined by prior coursework or a placement exam. Applications are made through UFunds and consist of the following components:

- A 250–450-word statement of purpose;
- a plan for completion of the requirements;
- approval from the DGS of the home department;
- the applicant’s CV;
- a B.A. or M.A. transcript.

Completion of the program

Upon the completion of the certificate requirements, students must submit the seminar paper written in the certificate language and their transcript to the DGS in the certificate department, as well as proof of their colloquium presentation. They should earn “A’s” in at least two of their certificate courses and not less than a “B” in the third.

Successful completion of the requirements of the certificate program will be recognized on the Brown University transcript with a notation indicating the completion of advanced study in Hispanic Studies or Portuguese and Brazilian Studies.

Certificate Program in Translation Studies

Students who have a professional interest in translation may want to consider enrolling in the Certificate Program in Translation Studies, offered under the auspices of the Department of Comparative Literature. The program provides a supplemental endorsement for students pursuing academic or non-academic job opportunities that involve translation.

For a detailed explanation of the requirements for this certificate, please visit [Graduate Certificate Program in Translation Studies | Comparative Literature | Brown University](#).

Doctoral Certificate in Collaborative Humanities

Offered by the Cogut Institute for the Humanities, the Doctoral Certificate in Collaborative Humanities is built through research practices dedicated to thinking together across disciplines and geographical locations. The program advances forms of inquiry through teaching models and student practices that experiment with group presentations, collaborative online discussions, co-authored seminar papers, and other forms of intellectual partnership. The doctoral certificate is part of the Institute’s Collaborative Humanities Initiative and is directed by Amanda Anderson.

For additional information, please check [Doctoral Certificate in Collaborative Humanities | Cogut | Brown University](#).

Certificate in Language Pedagogy and Academic Engagement

Offered under the auspices of the Center for Language Studies, the Certificate in Language Pedagogy and Academic Engagement gives formal recognition to the excellent training that happens across modern language departments and Brown University more broadly. This certificate enables graduate students to deepen their professionalization in language pedagogy and academic service, preparing them for the multiple facets of academic positions.

For more information, please visit [Doctoral Certificate in Language Pedagogy and Academic Engagement](#).

Deans' Faculty Fellow Program

Sponsored by the Offices of the Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the Faculty, the Deans' Faculty Fellows Program awards selected students a two-semester appointment as Visiting Assistant Professors, following completion of the Ph.D. degree. Typically, the fellowship involves teaching or co-teaching one course each semester in a host department.

The selection criteria include the applicant's record of excellence in teaching and scholarship; commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; effective departmental citizenship; timely completion of the degree (with extra consideration for applicants completing in six years or less), or, for applicants who do not have the Ph.D. in hand, their timely progress toward degree completion and their plan for completion; and, for all applicants, the support from the advisor and department. The department also requires that students who would like to be considered for a DFF submit a syllabus for a proposed undergraduate course by February 15.

DFFs are nominated according to the department's curricular needs, and selected candidates should be prepared to teach a variety of courses that will meet the department's curricular demands. Neither nominations for nor awards of DFFs are guaranteed.

Previous Portuguese and Brazilian Studies recipients of Deans' Faculty Fellowships include David M. Mittelman (Spring 2018), Chloe Hill (2020-2021, declined), and Pedro Lopes de Almeida (2021-2022), and Renato Amado Barreto (2023-2024, declined to accept a full-time position at the University of Arkansas).

TRANSITIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE

Graduate students pursuing a doctorate in Portuguese and Brazilian Studies may apply to receive a master's degree upon completion of their major paper and book review (third year). Students selecting this option will not be required to write a Master's Project. They should contact the Registrar's Office during the month of January following the completion of the third-year landmarks, and provide the following information: 1. Name; 2. Banner #; 3. Degree: Transitional Masters; 4. Program: Portuguese and Brazilian Studies; 5. DGS; 6. Requirements completed.

It is the students' responsibility to meet the deadline for filing the appropriate forms with the Registrar's Office in order to be awarded a master's degree.

International students should check with OISSS before requesting the transitional master's, as receiving it resets the program duration and could affect their visa status.