

**The Heller School  
for Social Policy and Management**

**Brandeis University**



**Academic Policies and Procedures  
Ph.D. Program in Social Policy**

**Fall 2025**

It is the policy of Brandeis University not to discriminate against any applicant on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual or affectional preference, age, national origin, veteran or disability status. The University encourages minorities and women to apply, both in terms of employment and to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to its students.

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## **Mission Statement**

### **Mission of The Heller School for Social Policy and Management and Ph.D. Program Goals**

Since its founding as Brandeis University's first professional school in 1959, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management has been committed to developing new knowledge and insights in the fields of social policy, management, and international development. Knowledge advancing social justice is the foundation of the Heller program. Through the training of students and pursuit of research, The Heller School is actively engaged in examining policies and programs that respond to the changing needs of vulnerable individuals and social groups in our society.

Students in the doctoral program pursue a course of study that provides intensive scholarly preparation in general and specialized social policy areas, honed research skills, and a strong working knowledge of various social science disciplines. A multidisciplinary and integrative approach to social policy is the hallmark of the Heller curriculum, preparing students to make original contributions to the literature through social research dissertations. It is the goal of the doctoral program to provide:

- a core curriculum that builds a knowledge and skills foundation within an integrative interdisciplinary environment;
- preparation in various research design and analytic methods that promotes a sophisticated level of empirical theory;
- concentrations in Children, Youth, and Families; Behavioral Health; Health including Global Health; Economic and Racial Equity; Children, Youth, and Families; and Global Development and Sustainability
- course offerings that foster breadth and depth;
- varied educational experiences inside and outside the classroom; and
- Individual mentoring through the educational and dissertation processes.

### **Program Requirements**

Students in the program must complete 60 credits over two years in residence (training grant has additional requirements). The core curriculum spreads across three categories: theory, methods, and area of concentration. Students have to take the 5.5 (22 credits) core curriculum courses. These are indicated by name below. In addition, students have to take one 4 credit course as well as a non-credit doctoral seminar in their area of concentration for the first eight semesters\*. Of the remaining 34 credits, 14 must be from an approved list of PhD Selective courses listed below, allowing for 20 elective credits. Electives can be chosen from a variety of offerings in all three categories. (Note: Students on the NIAAA training grant are required to take only 8 credits of PhD Selective courses and 8 Elective credit due to the 14 credits of course requirements of the training grant.

Upon the completion of course work, students must successfully complete an integrated Comprehensive Exam. Successful completion of all course work fulfills requirements for the Master of Arts in Social Policy. Successful completion the Comprehensive Exam allows students to proceed to the dissertation.

**Core Requirements (5.5 courses – 22 credits)**

| Course Number | Course Name                                                 | Credits | Faculty    | Usual Semester |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|----------------|
| HS 401b       | Research Methods                                            | 4       | Gittell    | Fall 1         |
| SOC 203B      | Field Methods                                               | 4       | Suh        | Fall 1         |
| HS 404b-1     | Applied Regression Analysis                                 | 4       | Panas      | Fall 1         |
| HS 326a-1     | Introduction to STATA<br>Programming and Data<br>Management | 2       | Huntington | Fall 1         |
| HS 510a       | Applied Design and Analysis                                 | 4       | Wright     | Spring 1       |
| HS 508a       | Theory of Social Policy and<br>Change                       | 4       | Sampath    | Spring 1       |

**REQUIRED COURSE BY CONCENTRATION:**

**Children, Youth and Families**

- HS334a Child and Family Policy
- HS602c Doctoral Seminar

**Economic and Racial Equity**

- HS 534b Perspectives in Economic and Racial Equity
- HS604c Doctoral Seminar

**Health, and Behavioral Health** (Students on NIAAA training grant have additional requirements. Please refer to Individualized Learning Plan- ILP)

- HS513a Issues in National Health Policy
- HS603c or HS605c Doctoral Seminar

\*third and fourth year students may attend their doctoral seminars virtually.

The following additional courses have been approved for PhD credit in the “Selectives” category on your Individualized Learning Plan (ILP). Any required course for a concentration outside of your own concentration may also be considered as a selective course:

**Full Semester Courses (4 credits)** \* indicates every other year, \*\* recommended for all PhD students

| Course Number | Course Name                                                                               | Faculty          | Term   |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| HS 212a       | Contemporary Issues in Gender and Public Policy*                                          | Bailey           | Fall   |
| HS 236a       | International Health Systems and Development                                              | Nandakumar       | Fall   |
| HS 303a       | Historical and Contemporary Developments in Social Welfare                                | Doonan           | Fall   |
| HS 307a       | Immigration Policy and Human Rights*                                                      | Piñeros -Shields | Spring |
| HS 334a       | Child, and Family Policy: U.S. and Cross-Cultural Perspectives                            | Warfield         | Spring |
| HS 346b       | Policy Perspectives on Criminal Justice Disparities*                                      | TDB              | Spring |
| HS 367a       | Working with National Data Sets to Inform Policy Analysis and Recommendations             | Meschede         | Fall   |
| HS 372b       | Economic Theory and Social Policy**                                                       | Lynch            | Spring |
| HS 407b       | Survey Research Methods                                                                   | Warfield         | Spring |
| HS 409a       | Advanced Econometrics**                                                                   | Hodgkin          | Fall   |
| HS 410a       | Applied Research Seminar: Quantitative**                                                  | TBD              | Spring |
| HS 412b       | Substance Use and Societal Consequences*                                                  | Green            | Fall   |
| HS 416a       | Foundations in Social Theory: From Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century to Critical Race Theory | Sampath          | Fall   |
| HS 526a       | Organizational Theory and Behavior**                                                      | Gittell          | Spring |
| HS 572a       | Economics of Behavioral Health*                                                           | Hodgkin          | Spring |
| HS 586a       | Issues in Addiction Treatment*                                                            | Reif             | Fall   |

**Half Semester Courses (modules – 2 credits)**

| Course Number | Course Name                                                                     | Faculty          | Term   |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| HS 273f       | Law and Social Justice: Gender Equity Policies and Litigation                   | Hill             | Spring |
| HS 314f       | Race and Economic Stratification in the US Economy                              | Lynch            | Fall   |
| HS 317f       | Labor Income, Labor Power and Labor Markets*                                    | Kuttner          | Spring |
| HS 320        | LGBTQ+ Justice: A History of Pride, Prejudice, and Policy in the United States* | Chakoian         | Spring |
| HS 322f       | Sociological Perspectives on Housing Disparities: Race and Stratification*      | Meschede         | Spring |
| HS 323f       | Participatory Action Research*                                                  | Piñeros -Shields | Spring |

|         |                                                                                     |          |        |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|
| HS 324f | Globalization, Development and Governance*                                          | Kuttner  | Fall   |
| HS 334f | Disability Policy: Intersections with Health, Poverty, Education and Family Policy* | Warfield | fall   |
| HS 406f | Multilevel Modeling*                                                                | Wright   | Fall   |
| HS 414f | Ethical Issues for Social Scientist*                                                | Reif     | Spring |
| HS 422f | Cost-Effectiveness                                                                  | Shepard  | Fall   |
| HS 505f | Quality and Performance Measurement in Health Care                                  | Garnick  | Spring |
| HS 507f | State Health Policy                                                                 | Doonan   | Spring |
| HS 528f | Law and Social Justice: Constructions of Race and Ethnicity and Their Consequences  | Hill     | Fall   |

### Fellowship Details and Requirements

All Heller PhD students receive a fellowship that covers full tuition, mandatory fees, premium for individual Brandeis health insurance plus and annual stipend in the first and second years and the continuation tuition, mandatory fees, premium for individual Brandeis health insurance plus an annual stipend in the third and fourth years.

- PhD students should typically not work more than 20 hours per week during any academic period in which they are classified as full-time students, inclusive of the work performed in their Research Assistant (RA), Teaching Assistant (TA), and Teaching Fellow (TF) positions. This policy is designed to protect a student's time available for scholarly activities such as coursework, reading, research and writing that are a part of graduate training. The complete [Policy on PhD student employment](https://www.brandeis.edu/provost/guidelines/policy-on-phd-student-employment.html) can be found here: <https://www.brandeis.edu/provost/guidelines/policy-on-phd-student-employment.html>
- Students who are on the training grant (NIAAA) receive the federal stipend amount and have additional requirements related to the grant. They are subject to specific restrictions regarding how many hours of employment at Brandeis University they may do per week and should discuss this with their program advisor to ensure they comply with the award.
- Limitations on work hours for international students sponsored by Brandeis on F-1 and J-1 visas are determined by federal regulations governing those visa programs. Please see [Brandeis ISSO](https://www.brandeis.edu/isso/employment/on-campus.html) <https://www.brandeis.edu/isso/employment/on-campus.html> for regulations governing on-campus employment.

Stipends are linked with milestones outlined below. Tuition, fees, and health insurance are billed on the University calendar and are posted based on student progressing toward program milestones. All PhD students must satisfy the following conditions each year to receive their fellowship. Students will sign a letter accepting the fellowship at the beginning of their 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years to clarify and update the general requirements listed below.

First Year:

- Follow Residency Requirements (see Residency Requirements below)
- Maintain Student Status (see relevant sections below)
- Maintain records of distinction in all courses (see Course Grades below).

Second Year:

- Follow Residency Requirements (see Residency Requirements below)
- Maintain Student Status (see relevant sections below)
- Maintain records of distinction in all courses (see Course Grades below).

Third Year:

- Have completed all 60 credits by final day of classes in the spring of their second year;
- Pass the comprehensive paper;
- Present a full dissertation proposal no later than August 1 of their third year;
- Regularly \*attend your concentration's doctoral seminar, present in the seminar, contribute to peer learning, and suggest agenda items to fit your research needs;
- Meet with faculty advisor or dissertation chair at beginning, middle and end of academic year;

Fourth Year:

- Successfully complete requirements of third year fellowship;
- Successfully defend a full dissertation proposal by August 1 of their third year;
- Regularly \*attend your concentration's doctoral seminar, present in the seminar, contribute to peer learning, and suggest agenda items to fit your research needs;
- Meet regularly with dissertation chair at least at the beginning, middle and end of each academic year;
- As part of the fellowship you are expected to work on your dissertation for the equivalent of full-time work during the 28 weeks of the funded semesters;

\*may attend virtually during the third and fourth year.

### Concentrations

The basic purpose of concentrations in the doctoral program is to ensure the availability to our students of a minimal core of faculty, courses, and infrastructure support in an area related to their professional interests. An additional purpose of the concentrations is to ensure that all students graduate with a baseline level of competence in a specific area of social policy that complements the core education and research skills they receive.

Each concentration offers specific courses. In addition, each student is required to participate in one of the doctoral seminars. Students who are on the NIAAA training grant will have additional requirements related to the grant. These requirements complement but do not replace the general degree requirements. Students who are not on a training grant may still concentrate in an area that has a training grant associated with it (e.g., behavioral health). Such students need only meet the specified requirements for their concentration area.

### Comprehensive Paper

As part of the degree requirements, Ph.D. students must successfully complete an integrative Comprehensive Paper. The paper is an original, scholarly, integrative analysis written at the completion of course work. While it is strongly recommended that students complete the required fifteen courses before taking the exam, they may take the exam with two elective courses remaining. However, funding is not guaranteed for the third year if coursework is not complete. Students are expected to demonstrate through this paper:

- An ability to relate theoretical approaches to the assigned topic based on either one or multiple disciplines or areas of knowledge.
- Knowledge of the history, developments and issues in the substantive aspect of the topic.
- An ability to apply an analytic approach to the assigned question.

- An ability to argue points clearly and to write at a level suitable for publication in professional journals.

The Comprehensive Paper requires students to apply knowledge and skills in a manner similar to the demands required to write a dissertation and to carry out research and writing in professional life. Each paper is graded by two faculty readers in the student's area of concentration. Students must write a paper that passes each of three sections (theory, methods and social policy). In order to pass, the paper must be graded Pass by both faculty readers. If the grade is Fail, the program director may:

1. permit the student to continue in the program
2. require additional coursework or study (with clearly specified goals) before continuing in the program.
3. terminate the student from the program.

If the student is permitted to continue in the program, with or without additional coursework, she or he will be required to take the comprehensive exam in the following year. Students who fail the exam at the second attempt will be terminated from the program.

A student's comprehensive examination essay may meet many Heller standards but be lacking in one or more specific areas. In this case, the student may receive a grade of Revise and Resubmit (R&R). When a student receives an R&R a recommendation is made, based on the reviewers' comments, about whom the student should meet. However, the student may meet with their advisor, concentration chair, or another faculty member if they choose. In any case, the task is to review the grader's comments and formulate a plan for revising the paper. The faculty member will meet once with the student to discuss strategy for the rewrite and must do so within the week following the notification to the student that they will have to rewrite the paper. Besides the one meeting with the faculty member, the student must revise their paper independently without further consultation with any other faculty, students, or anyone else. The revised paper must be submitted no later than two weeks from the date the student meets with the faculty member to formulate a plan for the revision. If the student's resubmitted comprehensive paper does not pass, the grade will be Fail.

Successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam and all course work allows students to proceed to the dissertation.

### **Dissertation Committees**

By the time students have finished taking courses, they will have focused their interests in a specific area and will have some idea of with whom they would like to work on a dissertation. Once a student's dissertation committee has been approved, the chair will assume the role of being the primary advisor. (See the document on "Dissertation Standards and Procedures" for more information on forming committees.)

### **Joint Ph.D. in Social Policy/Sociology**

The Ph.D. in Social Policy and Sociology is a joint degree of the Sociology Department and The Heller School for Social Policy and Management. Students may apply during the first year of study in their respective doctoral department. The application deadline is April 1 for the following September. Students are responsible for obtaining a letter of recommendation from their program director. If the student is accepted by the complementary department (admission is not guaranteed) the following procedures apply.

Joint degree students are funded by the program in which they first matriculate. Therefore, should any student accept an offer of admission for the joint degree with Sociology their funding will continue through the Heller School. All Heller PhD students receive full tuition, mandatory fees, Brandeis individual

health insurance and annual stipend (\$21,000 for 2025/2026) for the first two years of full-time study. A third and fourth year of funding is provided contingent upon meeting certain Fellowship requirements.

Given that the joint degree program adds additional coursework and an additional qualifying exam, we have modified the fourth-year fellowship requirements for joint degree students. The general Heller requirement for fourth year funding is proof of progress toward the degree by the completion of a dissertation proposal. In the case of a joint degree student, we will consider progress toward the successful completion of Qualifying Portfolio Defense (QPD) for the Department of Sociology as an equivalent proof of progress. The timing and terms of fourth year funding are unchanged, only the proof of progress is being modified to meet the circumstances of the dual degree.

#### *Program of Study*

Students entering the joint Ph.D. program in social policy and sociology are expected to complete a total of eighteen courses. At least eight courses must be offered by the Brandeis sociology department (comprising at least four graduate seminars) plus the Approaches to Sociological Research Proseminar, which is required during each semester of coursework following matriculation into the joint degree program). At least one of these sociology courses must be in theory.

A minimum of nine courses must be taken within the Heller School including the following requirements:

- 1) HS401b-1 Research Methods (4 credits)
- 2) SOC 203B Field Methods (4 credits)
- 3) HS404b-2 Applied Regression Analysis (4 credits)
- 4) HS508a Theory of Social Policy and Change (4 credits)
- 5) HS510a Applied Design and Analysis (4 credits)

The remaining four courses (16 credits) may be a combination of Heller concentration and methods courses. Students are also required to take a noncredit doctoral seminar at the Heller School for six semesters.

Students are assigned advisers from the sociology department and from the Heller School. Advisers in both departments work together with students to assure appropriate coherency in their program of courses. An interdepartmental meeting between advisers and students should take place at least once a year.

#### *Residence Requirement*

The minimum residence for the joint Ph.D. degree is three years.

#### *Teaching Requirement*

All joint Ph.D. students must participate in undergraduate teaching. This typically means leading discussion sections or otherwise working in collaboration with individual professors. Ph.D. students also have an opportunity to develop the craft of teaching through teaching workshops within the Sociology department and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

#### *Language Requirement*

There is no foreign language requirement for the joint Ph.D. degree.

#### *Comprehensive/Qualifying Examinations*

Each student must complete a comprehensive paper as required in the Heller School curriculum. Students must also show competence in two areas of sociology, as certified through the Qualifying Portfolio and

Defense (QPD) process. Students elect two areas of interest and develop a contractual set of requirements with a faculty member of each area. When both QPDs are completed, there is a meeting (typically one to two hours) to discuss the student's interests, directions in the field, and the upcoming dissertation.

QPD membership and chair must be approved by the Sociology Graduate Committee by the end of the semester prior to completion of coursework. Accreditation in the two QPD areas must be completed by the end of the semester following completion of coursework following a full QPD meeting. Chair's report to the Sociology Graduate Committee must be approved.

#### *Dissertation and Defense/Final Oral Examination*

A dissertation proposal should be submitted soon after the comprehensive examination and QPDs are completed. The dissertation committee should consist of five members—two faculty members each from the Department of Sociology and the Heller School and one member from outside Brandeis University. Students must submit paperwork for committee, proposal hearing and defense approvals to both departments. The joint Ph.D. dissertation may be accepted by the sociology department and the Heller School upon the recommendation of the dissertation committee. To be granted the degree, the student is required to defend the dissertation in a public final oral examination.

#### **Academic Advising**

Students are assigned advisors by the school's concentration chairs prior to the first semester of study. Assignments are made based on the student's area of interest and faculty availability. Students are free to change their advisors should they find someone more fitting to their interests. Signatures need to be collected by the student on a "Change of Advisor Form" and submitted to the Ph.D. program for the student record.

Students should meet with their advisor each semester for the first two years to discuss Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs). The advisor will recommend and approve course choices and sign the ILP that the student will return to the PhD Program Manager by the final day of registration. In addition, at the end of each year for the first three years the student should meet with their advisor to discuss their professional goals and development. The professional development meeting will vary in content based on the individual and the year in the program but the discussion might include:

- 1) The fit between research plans and course-based training.
  - a. Is the student taking the right courses to prepare substantively for their dissertation?
  - b. Is there a methodological match between plans and coursework?
  - c. What skills does the student need to hone and how?
  - d. What other faculty should the student plan to meet?
  - e. How does the student access additional support/resources when needed?
- 2) Opportunities for practical research experience.
  - a. What is the student doing or planning to do to get experience in putting the concepts and methods they learn in class into actual practice in research?
  - b. Is the student involved with any grant funded research projects? If not, what should the do to get on a project?
- 3) Experience in grant writing
  - a. Is the student submitting small grants for such things as dissertation support and/or playing a role with faculty who are submitting grants?
- 4) Conferences
  - a. What conferences should the student attend? How many?

- b. Purpose of attending conference in early years. What should the student expect?
  - c. Submitting papers or posters at conferences.
- 5) Writing experience for publication
  - a. Does the student have plans to write for publication?
  - b. Is the student a co-author on a faculty paper?
- 6) Heller Career Development
  - a. Has the student met with Career Development? Attended a workshop?

The professional development meeting is scheduled by the faculty advisor. After the meeting, the student will prepare a statement that documents the discussion. Both the advisor and the student will sign this statement and the student will return it to the Ph.D. Program Manager. Both ILPs and Professional Development statements will be filed in the student record.

Advisors provide guidance with respect to: a) curriculum resources relative to a student's goals and background; b) in-depth discussion about research interests and dissertation areas; c) relevant information on current research at Heller and elsewhere; and d) resources available to meet student needs. Thus, the general role of the advisor is to help students move forward with their dissertation planning, assist them in developing their theoretical and research goals, suggest needed resources, and propose mechanisms for establishing a dissertation committee.

In addition to faculty advisors, advice and information is available to students on a regular basis from the Ph.D. Program Director, and the Concentration Chairs and the Ph.D. Program Manager.

### **Registration and Course Enrollment**

Before each registration period, students will receive notification of deadlines by which all students must register or be administratively withdrawn from the University.

Registration and course enrollment are the same process. By enrolling in a course, you are officially registering with the University for that term. Registration signals your acceptance of the rights and responsibilities of being a Brandeis student as contained in the Brandeis Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, the University Bulletin, and other University publications. Every category of student (resident, post-resident, continuation, fulltime, and part-time) should register for full semester, module I and module II courses or status during the registration period.

Every student must have a health examination report and evidence of health insurance coverage on file at University Health Services. A student who has not completed the University's health requirements or who has outstanding financial or other obligations will have a "Hold" placed on his or her account and will not be allowed to register. If holds are not cleared up by the last day of the course enrollment period, students will be administratively withdrawn from the University. Once a student is administratively withdrawn from the University, he or she will be required to reapply for admission in a subsequent semester.

### **Choosing Courses**

The registration period is long enough to allow students to "shop" for classes before making a final decision. Students should set up a meeting with their advisors to discuss course selection and plan of study. The Heller School reserves the right to cancel courses that fall below an enrollment of 5 matriculated students.

### **Policy Capping Module Credits**

Heller students are not permitted to register for more than 20 credits per semester distributed as evenly as possible between Module I and Module II within the semester. Permission to take over 20 credits may be granted by the student's academic program under special circumstances.

### Selecting Research Courses

The program does not presume that one selection of elective research courses is superior to any other; however, the timing of courses is set up to permit appropriate sequencing. In deciding what courses to take, students should ask themselves the following questions about any research course:

- 1) Must I take this course as a pre-requisite for another research course I plan to take? If the answer is yes, take the course unless you believe you have already mastered that area of research. The instructor of the course must grant permission to enroll if you did not take the prerequisite.
- 2) Do I plan or is it likely that I will be writing a dissertation utilizing the research methods taught in a particular course? If the answer is yes, take the course unless you believe you have already mastered that area of research. A student must demonstrate that he or she is qualified in the methods of research he or she intends to use in his/her dissertation for his/her proposal to be approved.
- 3) Will this particular research course improve my ability to read more critically research in social policy? If the answer is yes, decide what is appropriate based on your priorities.
- 4) Do my career plans include jobs where it would be essential or desirable to know a particular field of research? If the answer is yes, take the course to increase your own market value.

### Tutorials

A student might wish to design an independent study project that allows a more in-depth approach to a topic than is offered by an existing course, or that allows exploration of some topic for which there is no appropriate course offering. Normally, a student should not take a tutorial until he or she has completed a semester (or four courses) at The Heller School.

Credit for a tutorial is equivalent to either one full-semester (4 credits) or half-semester module course (2 credits) and should include the equivalent amount of reading and writing as a regular course. A course usually involves 42 hours of class time, 50-60 readings and several papers. Written work might be in the form of one longer paper, several shorter papers, critical essays on a body of literature, or appropriate data analysis exercises.

To take a tutorial for credit, a student should identify a faculty member willing to supervise the tutorial. After conferring with the faculty supervisor, the faculty member must submit a course proposal to the Program Director describing the tutorial and covering the following points:

- 1) a clear statement of educational goals;
- 2) a sequenced list of readings and products (this may not be a week by week list but there needs to be sections and stages);
- 3) a plan for regular interaction between the professor and the student;
- 4) a plan for deliverables to the faculty member;
- 5) a plan for how the professor will evaluate student performance.

Caveats for acceptable tutorials:

- 1) Students acting as research assistants may not propose an independent study that reflects their work on the project. This is so even if that work enhances the project or their understanding of it. Research assistantships are of great educational value. We rightly pay students to engage and

contribute to research. Research assistantships and courses both contribute to professional development but we need to keep them distinct.

- 2) Dissertation preparation and proposal preparation are a student's responsibility and we now provide funding for the time to do this work. It is important, but it is not a course. Independent studies that involve literature reviews, dissertation background, etc. will not be approved.
- 3) As a general rule, a maximum of two independent studies will be approved for any one student over the course of two years.
- 4) As a general rule a student will only be allowed to take one independent study per semester.
- 5) An independent study on a specialized methodology is perfectly appropriate. In general, these should be conceptualized as a module and only 2 credits should be requested.

The faculty supervisor must approve the proposal. After obtaining this approval, the student completes a **tutorial request form**, which is available online on the Heller homepage under Current Students. The form must be signed by the tutorial supervisor, the student's advisor, and the Program Director and returned to the Assistant Director, Academic and Student Services before the end of the registration period in order to receive credit for the tutorial.

### **Auditing Courses**

Students may audit Heller School classes with the permission of the instructor. To have an audited course noted on his or her permanent record, the student should sign up for the course at the time of registration and have the course changed to an audit through the Assistant Director Academic and Student Services. The student should also notify the professor, who will be asked at the end of the semester to certify that the student has attended class on a regular basis. The student should discuss the specific definition of "regular" with the professor at the beginning of the semester, especially if the student knows ahead of time that he or she will have to miss some sessions.

### **Courses in Other Brandeis Departments**

Students are encouraged to avail themselves of the rich graduate offerings and faculty in other Brandeis departments. Courses in the departments of sociology, economics, history, and politics may be of particular interest. To sign up for these courses, students should discuss their intent with their advisors, note it on the ILP, receive program approval, and sign up for the course through the regular registration process.

### **Courses Outside Brandeis University**

The Heller School has cross-registration agreements with Babson College, Bentley University School of Business Administration, Boston College, Boston University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Urban Studies), Regis College, and Tufts University (excluding the Fletcher School). A full-time graduate student at the Heller School may enroll in one graduate-level course per term (excluding the summer term) at any one of these institutions. Information on courses for cross-registration at each of the host institutions is available at the graduate school office of each institution.

Students may take any graduate-level course at these schools that fits reasonably into their educational goals and does not duplicate a course offered at Brandeis, with several provisos:

- 1) Consortium schools do not allow cross-registration in some of their graduate programs, or in particular courses.
- 2) Students need the permission of the instructor to register.
- 3) Outside courses may not be used to substitute for courses offered in The Heller School's curriculum unless there are serious and unavoidable extenuating circumstances. In such

cases, the student should secure the approval of their faculty advisor and the Program Director. The approval should be put in writing in the student's official file.

- 4) Full-time students are permitted to take a maximum of four courses outside The Heller School and may take no more than one consortium course per semester. These consortium privileges are not applicable to part-time students.
- 5) Students should obtain a copy of the course description from the school, discuss with advisor and list on Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) in the semester the course is taken.
- 6) Consortium privileges do not extend to the summer term. If a student wishes to enroll for a summer course at one of the consortium schools, he or she will be responsible for paying full tuition to that school.

The consortium schools have a tuition sharing agreement, so students who register for a course at one of the consortium schools do not have to pay tuition there but must still pay full tuition at Brandeis.

**A student should follow these [instructions](#) to register for a course at one of the consortium schools.**

#### **Graduate Courses at Accredited Programs Outside of Brandeis University at Non-Consortium Schools**

Students may take graduate level courses in accredited graduate programs other than those in the consortium, although the provisions listed above (1-5) also apply. To do so, the student must:

- 1) Secure a course description and syllabus;
- 2) Have the permission of the Program Director, in writing;
- 3) File the written approval with the PhD Program Manager; and
- 4) Pay tuition and register for the course at the other school.

Upon completion of the course the student is responsible for getting an official transcript to Heller's Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Services.

#### **Transfer Credit**

Students entering the Heller Ph.D. program with graduate credits from Brandeis or another institution may petition the voting members of the Ph.D. program committee for a reduction of the required course load of 60 credits by up to 12 credits. These petitions should be submitted no later than the fall of a student's second year in the program. Courses being transferred toward Ph.D. degree program credit must carry a grade of B or better.

#### **Withdrawal from Courses**

A student may withdraw from a course if he or she finds that for any reason it is not satisfactory or finds he is unable to complete the requirements. However, the student must officially withdraw by submitting a completed Add/Drop form to the Assistant Director, Academic and Student Services by the university deadline. The student must ensure that withdrawing from a course will not have an impact on their ability to meet program/university requirements. The withdrawal policy for courses taken outside Brandeis (e.g., in "consortium schools") may be different from Brandeis' policies. Students must conform to the policies of the host institution.

#### **Exceptions and Waivers**

If a student feels that they need any kind of exception to a policy or rule, a student should talk first with their advisor. The advisor can help a student think through the issues before they write a formal letter of

request to the Director of the Ph.D. Program for an exception. The Program Director must approve any exception or waiver to a policy regarding an academic requirement. An example of such an exception is waiving a course that a student has already taken at a graduate level at a comparable institution. To obtain a waiver, the student must fill out a petition for waiver of a required course and submit the form, along with a transcript and a course syllabus, to the course instructor and the Program Director. The course instructor will review the syllabus and make a recommendation to the Program Director who will make the final decision and inform the student. Students must have received a grade of B or higher to be eligible for a waiver. Once the student receives written approval they must send the approval, transcript, and syllabus to the PhD Program Office to be placed in the student's official file.

Students who waive a requirement must replace the waived course with another graduate course appropriate for credit within the program. When initiating the course waiver request, the student should discuss with his or her advisor or the Program Director what alternative course is of interest. In the written request for waiver made to the course instructor and Program Director, each alternative course should be named and, if not taught at Heller, its catalogue course description or syllabus should be attached.

## Evaluation Procedures

### Course Grades

Graduate students are expected to maintain records of distinction in all courses. The Heller School Ph.D. program uses a satisfactory/unsatisfactory system of evaluation.

**Satisfactory:** indicates that a student has successfully completed all the requirements of the course and has earned course credit toward the degree.

**Unsatisfactory:** indicates that a student's performance does not meet the requirements for course credit. If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade, he or she may re-take the course at the next time it is offered.

The grading policy for courses taken outside Heller (e.g., in other Brandeis departments or consortium schools) may be different from the Heller PhD evaluation policy. Students must conform to the grading policy of the host department or institution.

#### *Grade Appeal Process*

All Heller course instructors will make independent decisions about their grading process and will be supported in those decisions by The Heller School's program and administrative staffs. However, any student who feels they have been graded incorrectly or unfairly in a course taken for credit may take the following steps. First, the student should contact the instructor to set up a meeting within seven business days after the grade in question is made available. If such a meeting results in a mutually acceptable solution, the grade will be adjusted accordingly.

If the meeting does not result in a mutually acceptable solution, the student should submit a written statement, specifying the nature of the complaint and the remedy desired, to the director of the program in which the student is enrolled within seven business days of the meeting. Although there will be a presumption in favor of the instructor, the program director or their designee will consider all evidence presented by the student and will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible, normally within seven business days, from submission of the complaint. Final disposition of the appeal will be in writing to all parties involved. The decision of the program director or their designee is final.

At each level, the agreed upon resolution or decision should be in writing. Each party should retain a copy and the original decision should be forwarded to the Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Services for placement in the student's academic record.

The Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Services is available to consult with the student at any step of the grievance process.

In addition to an overall assessment, students have the right to meaningful feedback regarding their performance in a course. When they do not receive feedback, they have the right to approach the instructor or Program Director. Each instructor may give feedback in any way they deem appropriate. This might include written comments on papers and exams, personal meetings, etc. The course syllabus will inform the student how feedback will be delivered. If a student requests to meet with an instructor, the instructor is obligated to respond to this request.

Brandeis University reserves the authority to sever relations with students whose academic performance is so deficient as to suggest an inability to meet academic requirements. The academic performance and potential for degree completion will be reviewed by a faculty committee appointed by the Director of the Ph.D. program when a doctoral student receives two unsatisfactory or Excused Incomplete (EI) grades or one of each in a term. After reviewing all relevant information, this committee will make a recommendation to the Dean as to whether the student should stay or be asked to leave the program. The Dean will make the final decision, in consultation with the student and faculty (as the Dean considers appropriate).

### **Incompletes**

Students are expected to complete all requirements for a course by the end of the semester in which it is offered. If a student encounters extenuating circumstances during a semester that prevents them from completing coursework, they must ask the instructor for an extension. It is the responsibility of the student to approach the instructor well in advance with such a request. Instructors are not required to give extensions, so students are again responsible to check with the instructor to determine whether their reason(s) for not completing requirements on time is acceptable.

A Schedule of Deadlines should be developed by the student and shared and discussed with the instructor prior to approval. The dates set for completion of the work in the **Schedule of Deadlines** must be well before the maximum time allowed by University as noted on the [Academic Calendar](#)<sup>1</sup>. The instructor will send the Schedule of Deadlines to the Program Director for review and approval. Once the extension is approved, the Instructor should issue a temporary grade of "EI" for the student on the grading roster. If the extension is not approved or if the student does not follow the policy for requesting an extension, the instructor will issue a grade of Unsatisfactory "U" on the grading roster.

If a student is granted an Excused Incomplete, they are subject to the following:

- 1) The student must finish all requirements for the course(s) by the dates agreed upon between student, instructor, and the program as outlined in the **Schedule of Deadlines**.
- 2) If all course work is not completed per the Schedule of Deadlines, the instructor will issue a grade of Permanent Incomplete or Unsatisfactory.
- 3) If the grade has not been changed by the instructor by the dates published in the Brandeis [Academic Calendar](#), the grade will be converted to a Permanent Incomplete by the University Registrar.
- 4) If the student must retake a required course or wishes to retake an elective course for which they received an Incomplete or Unsatisfactory grade, those credits attempted will count toward their maximum allowed within an academic term.

### **Academic Standing**

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1 Academic Calendar dates are determined each year by University Registrar.

A student with two or more Permanent Incompletes, two or more Unsatisfactory grades or one Permanent Incomplete and one Unsatisfactory grade in Required Courses will be asked to leave the program.

Tuition scholarships and training grants are based on good academic standing. A student who has not earned 24 credits by the end of their first academic year in residence, is not in good academic standing. (Excused Incomplete grades do not count as credit earned.)

#### **Policy on Laptop Use During Class time**

Laptops may be used in Heller classrooms at the discretion of the course instructor. The instructor may ban them or restrict their use. In no case shall students use laptops for purposes other than taking notes or other instructor approved tasks. Surfing the web, email and text messaging are not permitted under any circumstances and are a breach of professional conduct.

Laptops are not permitted to be used during exams unless the instructor deems them integral to the taking of the exam. Cell phones and PDAs must be silenced during all classes and may not be used during exams.

#### **Evaluation of Courses by Students**

Students evaluate every course taken at The Heller School by completing an online evaluation with questions about the instructor and the course content. The School takes these evaluations seriously and considers student input important. These evaluations are entirely anonymous. Instructors are not shown the students' course evaluations until they have turned in all grades.

Students are urged to discuss courses with professors while they are in progress. Students should not feel that they must wait until the end of the semester to voice their concern on the course evaluation form.

Course evaluations are available on the Heller home page under the Current Students heading.

#### **Satisfying Residency Requirements and Maintaining Student Status**

##### **Residency Requirements**

The Heller School PhD Program has three student status categories that govern residency and tuition policy: Required-Residence, Post-Residence, and Continuation.

##### *Required-Residence*

Required-residence is 2 years for full-time students. Full-time students are enrolled in at least 12 credits per semester. Full tuition is required for each residence year, whether a Heller scholarship or an outside fellowship.

Part-time students must take two courses per semester. All courses must be paid for in full. A part-time student who wishes to go full-time must receive approval from the Program Director. That student will then be charged the full-time tuition for all remaining semesters. Part-time students who change to full-time should not expect financial aid.

##### *Post-Resident*

Students who have completed the required residence, courses and comprehensive paper register as post-resident students and have their tuition reduced to the Post-Resident rate. The post-resident fee allows a student to use University facilities, register for courses, receive V.A. benefits, and serve on Heller or University Committees. Post-Resident students may also defer payments on student loans; however, they must be able to prove that they are working at least half-time on their dissertation. Students in this

category must be covered by health insurance, whether it is private insurance or the University's student health insurance plan. A student under this status may not be hired as a full-time employee on a Heller research project. This is a full-time student status.

#### *Continuation*

A student who has completed all courses and the comprehensive paper and has an approved dissertation proposal becomes a Continuation student and pays the continuation fee. The annual fee for continuation status is less than that of a post-resident and entitles the student to the same University services with the exception of enrolling in classes. Continuation students must be covered by health insurance, whether it is private insurance or the University's health insurance plan. Continuation students may be hired as a full-time employee (research associate) on a research project.

#### **Maintaining Student Status**

To maintain student status, students should keep in mind:

- To be considered full-time, resident students need to take a minimum of 12 credits per semester. Full-time status is especially important for people with student loans, training grants, and fellowships.
- Part-time students must take 2 courses per semester. A student who wishes to take only 1 course because of special circumstances needs a written approval from his or her advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director.
- No student will be allowed to maintain status and register if he or she owes any tuition and/or fees from prior semesters (see the 'Payments and Billing' section).

Every student must have a health examination report and evidence of health insurance coverage on file at University Health Services. First-year students will not be allowed to register until they have submitted the Brandeis University Health Services Physician's Report completed by their doctor. Each year, all full-time students are automatically billed for the University health insurance individual coverage. Students who have private health insurance coverage can have the charge removed from his/her bill by returning the health insurance waiver form to the Health Services Department providing details about his/her private insurance coverage.

#### **Limit of Candidacy for the Ph.D. Degree**

##### *General Guidelines*

- 1) All required coursework and the comprehensive paper are expected to be completed within two calendar years from admission for full-time students, and four calendar years for part-time students.
- 2) The dissertation proposal development, review, and hearing are expected to be completed within one calendar year after #1.
- 3) The dissertation is expected to be completed and defended within two calendar years after #2.

These guidelines are not intended to restrict the pace with which any student proceeds in the Ph.D. program. Rather, they articulate the expected pace that most students should follow.

##### *Time Limit in the Ph.D. Program*

While the expected time for completion of the Ph.D. Program is 4-5 years, the maximum time limit for completion is 10 years from entry into the program, 12 years for part-time students (subject to any relevant accommodations as discussed below). Except in situations where there is an approved

accommodation, there will be no possibility for reinstatement after the maximum time limit has been reached.

Full-time students must defend their dissertations no later than 9½ years (before March 1) from entry into the program. Part-time Heller School for Social Policy and Management students must defend their dissertations no later than 11½ years (before March 1) from their entry in the program. If any student's dissertation committee requires changes, whether major or minor, the student has no more than 6 months to make minor changes or successfully re-defend his or her dissertation for major revisions. Full-time students must successfully defend their dissertation proposal, including minor or major changes, within 6 years (before August 31) from the date of entry into the program. Part-time students must successfully defend their dissertation proposal, including any minor or major changes, by 8 years (before August 31) after their entry into the program (August 31). Except in situations where there is an approved accommodation, failure to successfully defend either the proposal or the dissertation within these time limits will result in termination from the program.

Brandeis University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and to the protection and equal treatment of pregnant students and students with pregnancy-related conditions. Students requiring reasonable accommodations based on a documented disability or pregnancy-related conditions may be entitled to an extension to any time limits in the Heller Ph.D. Program. Students who believe they may require a disability accommodation should contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) ([access@brandeis.edu](mailto:access@brandeis.edu); 781-736-3470) who will consult with the student and conduct an individualized assessment to determine whether and what accommodations may be necessary. Pregnancy accommodation requests may go through Student Accessibility Support or the Office of Equal Opportunity, or both offices may be involved, depending on the nature of the request. Please contact [access@brandeis.edu](mailto:access@brandeis.edu) or [oeo@brandeis.edu](mailto:oeo@brandeis.edu) to start a conversation.

#### *Actions to Monitor Progress*

Although students are responsible for ensuring that their progress is satisfactory and timely, the PhD program will contact students in writing each year after successful completion of comprehensive exam to ensure that students are fully aware of their progress and of the School's policies and expectations. Students who are not achieving satisfactory progress may be asked to leave the program.

#### **Leaves of Absence**

Time spent on authorized leaves of absence will not be counted toward the maximum time permitted to complete degree requirements. For authorized leaves policies, visit the [University Bulletin, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management](#) and use the Academic Regulations drop down for details. Students who want to request a leave of absence should contact Ravi Lakshmikanthan, Associate Dean, Global and Strategic Initiatives, [kanthan@brandeis.edu](mailto:kanthan@brandeis.edu)

#### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Students who wish to withdraw voluntarily from The Heller School at any time before the end of the academic year must give immediate written notice to the Ph.D. Program Manager and the Assistant Director for Student Records and Enrollment on or before the last day on instruction for the term. Failure to comply may subject the student to administrative withdrawal, refusal of readmission, cancellation of the privilege of securing an official transcript and loss of eligibility for a partial refund of tuition. Permission to withdraw will not be granted if the student has not discharged all financial indebtedness to the University or has not made arrangements for subsequent payment to the satisfaction of the Bursar's Office.

#### **Readmission**

Periodically, students who have withdrawn from the program wish to return. When this occurs the Program Director will form a faculty committee to review the re-admission request. The student will be

asked to prepare a petition stating just where they are in the dissertation process and a time-table for completion within the time limits in place when they matriculated. The detailed content of this request will vary based on where the student is in the process and the requirements for its content will be conveyed to the student in writing by the Director. The central criteria for evaluation are whether the student has a high probability of completing a quality dissertation with the time remaining to them.

### **Submission of Proposals for Outside Funding**

The PhD program encourages students to locate and apply for outside funding. Faculty and concentration heads can be good resources for learning about funding opportunities. In addition, students should search in Handshake, Heller's online career database.

As soon as a student has identified a funding source they wish to apply for, contact **must** be made with the Associate Director of Research Accounting at the Heller School. This process begins with the submission of the Heller School Proposal Alert Form. This form must be signed by the student's advisor or dissertation chair and the appropriate Institute Director associated with the student's concentration. The Grants and Contracts Manager will then review the Request for Proposal or program announcement and meet with the student to go over the requirements and timing.

It is critical to alert the Associate Director or Research Accounting, who will help students ensure all necessary paperwork is submitted to the Brandeis University Office of Research Administration in a timely manner. Personnel in both these offices are extremely busy and must be aware of student intentions in order for deadlines to be met.

### **Payments and Billing Procedures**

#### **Tuition Bills**

All students (full-time, post resident and continuation) will be billed for half the total tuition in the summer (for fall term) and in the fall (for spring term).

For students receiving a full or partial tuition scholarship, this scholarship will be divided in half and deducted from each semester's total tuition and fees. This scholarship will be reflected on the student's bill. Incoming and continuing students **MUST** complete a Graduate Health Insurance Selection/Reporting form. If a student is receiving a health insurance credit as part of their award package, it will be credited in whole during the fall term. Insurance is billed in whole during the fall semester for the whole academic year. Renewal of tuition and fees scholarships is based on good academic standing.

Any student who has not paid tuition by the due date will incur a late fee and have a hold placed on his or her registration by the Office of Student Financial Services. Graduate students may deduct the 1st disbursement of their subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans ( $\frac{1}{2}$  of the loan amount minus 1.066% origination fees) from the balance due. If students have a billing or financial aid question, they should speak to the Office of Student Financial Services.

Part-time students are billed on a per course basis and will receive a bill after registration. Tuition payments may be made by check, money order or credit card. For more information, visit the [Office of Student Financial Services](http://www.brandeis.edu/sfs/studentaccounts/payment.html) website at <http://www.brandeis.edu/sfs/studentaccounts/payment.html>

#### **Matriculation Fee Refund**

Students who are receiving a full tuition scholarship may be refunded their \$500 matriculation deposit under the normal refund process after all tuition and fees have been paid. To obtain a refund, request through Sage Self Service. The link to the refund request can be found in the Student Center Finances section under "My Account." Part-time students will have the \$500 deposit applied against their tuition

### **Stipend Checks**

All graduate school stipends are paid on the 15th and 31st of every month or the business day closest to these dates beginning as stated in the student's acceptance letter. All students must have their I-9 forms verified before they receive their first stipend payment as well as set up Direct Deposit in Workday. In December and May checks are processed earlier due to semester break and the end of the academic year.

### ***Tax Policy for Stipends***

No Brandeis University employee may provide individuals with specific advice on personal tax matters; individuals in need of personal advice should consult a personal tax advisor. The information provided is informational only and not intended to be relied on for tax or legal advice.

Below are links you may find useful in answering your questions:

<https://www.brandeis.edu/student-financial-services/employment/direct-deposit-tax.html>

<https://www.brandeis.edu/graduate-affairs/resources/grad-taxes/index.html>

For International Students:

<https://www.brandeis.edu/isso/current/taxes/index.html>

### **Ph.D. Graduation Fee (Final Doctoral Fee)**

All students must pay the final doctoral fee prior to the receipt of their degree. The Application for Degree can be found [online](http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/forms/graddegree.html) at <http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/forms/graddegree.html>. Once the application is completed the PhD Graduation Fee will be applied to your account and may be paid directly through Workday.

### **University Policies**

#### **Academic Records**

The official student record of courses taken, relevant correspondence, and any special arrangements regarding requirements will be maintained by the Ph.D. Program Office and the Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Services. Advisors may also keep such a record, but students should not depend on that. The file in the PhD Office is the **official** file, so if there are any special permissions or waivers, it is the student's responsibility to see that a copy gets to this Office. It is recommended that students keep copies for their own records.

Documentation in the official file is audited to determine student eligibility to graduate. Regardless of conversations that may have informally taken place, if a matter is not formalized in writing and in the official file, it will not be taken into account in the audit.

#### **Disability**

If you are a student who wants to request a medical academic accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) [access@brandeis.edu](mailto:access@brandeis.edu); 781-736-3470.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is central to the mission of Brandeis University and the Heller School. As stated in the student handbook, "every member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. A student shall not receive credit for work that is not the product of the student's own effort." Allegations of academic dishonesty by students are reported to the Department of Student Development and Judicial Education for adjudication within the student judicial system.

### **Student Judicial System**

The University establishes standards of student behavior and reserves the right to suspend or permanently dismiss students whose conduct warrants such action. These standards apply to all Heller students. The University will give due notice and, if requested, a hearing before the appropriate body. The Department of Student Development and Judicial Education administers the student judicial system. Standards, policies, and procedures are published in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, published by the Division of Student Life.

### **Administrative Withdrawals**

Students who do not comply with registration procedures, medical documentation requirements, and financial obligations are subject to administrative withdrawal from the University. Any Heller student receiving notification of impending administrative withdrawal should immediately contact the Assistant Director for Student Records.

### **Transcripts**

Information about obtaining an official transcript, visit the Office of the University Registrar can be found here: <https://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/transcript/electronic-transcript.html>

### **Brandeis University Records Policy**

Brandeis University Education Records: Statement of Policy and Procedures can be found here:

<https://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/EducRecordsPolicy.html>

### **Directory Information/Privacy Settings**

Information about student directory information and privacy settings can be found here:

<https://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/registration/privacy-settings.html>