



**BROWN**  
School of Professional Studies

**BROWN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

**STRATEGIC PLAN - FY 2021-2023 Plan**

Brown University's School of Professional Studies brings a Brown education to new audiences of learners: those focused on development of skills and a breadth of knowledge necessary for professional success and leadership. We leverage Brown's intellectual centers of excellence, rigorous teaching, and developmental approach to learning in a range of programs serving students outside of traditional degree programs. We partner with Brown departments, centers, institutes, and schools to develop degree and non-degree programs, and to support the recruitment, retention, and placement success of professional students. The success of these endeavors will be evident in new populations of successful alumni, in increasing connections between Brown and industry leaders across a range of industries, and in increasingly in-demand professional programs.

**I. Mission, Vision, and Values**

**SPS Mission Statement**

The Brown School of Professional Studies leverages the University's excellence in liberal arts, interdisciplinary study, critical thinking, and cutting-edge research to forge 21st century professionals.

**Vision**

Brown will be a national leader in transformative professional education, rooted in Brown's areas of scholarly excellence and in Brown's tradition of excellence in instruction. By linking professional education to areas of scholarly excellence, the School of Professional Studies will amplify connections between Brown's research programs and the professional application of research results.

**Values**

Inclusion  
Collaboration  
Excellence  
Innovation  
Positivity

## **II. Low Residency Degree Programs**

Over the past decade, the School of Professional Studies has launched four low-residency master's programs that combine online instruction with 4-5 intensive in-person sessions. As we move into the new phase of the School, we seek to bring these programs closer to the core academic centers of excellence on campus. Closer connection to core academic units will ensure the academic rigor of the degree programs, and will increase the value of the degree programs to Brown. Curricula, advising, and instruction will be under the purview of academic units just as full-time residential degrees are. Faculty within the home School/Department will lead and teach in these programs as a part of their regular service and teaching obligations, ensuring appropriate leadership and core faculty providing instruction. Courses on topics outside the area of the home unit (leadership, management, marketing, business economics, etc.) will continue to be staffed where possible by Brown faculty and in some cases by adjunct faculty.

Three of the four current executive master's programs will transition to have academic departmental homes within Schools/Departments. The Executive Masters in Cybersecurity will be renamed an ScM in Cybersecurity and fall under the purview of the Department of Computer Science. The Executive Masters in Healthcare Leadership will be renamed an ScM in Healthcare Leadership and fall under the purview of the School of Public Health. The Executive Masters in Science and Technology Leadership will be renamed an ScM in Technology Leadership and fall under the purview of the School of Engineering. The IE Brown Executive MBA will remain as is, jointly offered with IE Business School and managed at Brown by a faculty committee.

## **III. Professional Masters Support Services**

The numbers of terminal master's degrees and students at Brown have increased faster than the infrastructure to support them. In particular, investments in the recruitment and professional development of professional master's students are necessary to attract and serve the best students. Beyond these areas, staffing levels in the Graduate School and other service areas have not kept pace with the student support and other demands of a growing body of professional students. The planned activities and investments fully realize the potential of master's education at Brown, and they reflect the University's commitment to academic excellence at every level of education. They carry forward work that was supported by NECHE's 2018 re-accreditation report, which indicated good progress on a significant area of concern in the 2008 report. They respond to long-standing areas of concern expressed by faculty, staff, and students in the review of all master's programs in 2017-18, which indicated that master's programs, and particularly professionally-oriented programs, require significant support in order to be truly excellent, to thrive, serve students well, and ensure long-term viability. These activities will produce high-quality outcomes that support both academic excellence and an excellent student experience, and they will unlock the potential to provide world class education to distinctive populations of graduate students.

Over the next three years, the School of Professional Studies will build staff and technological infrastructure to support recruitment, professional development, student services, student support, and alumni outreach and engagement. These services will build on our experience with the past executive master's degrees, but will serve all master's programs and students on campus.

#### **IV. Non-Credit Bearing Programs**

Building on our experience with executive master's degrees, the School of Professional Studies is focusing on the professional education portion of the non-degree market. Today's rapid pace of technological, economic, and demographic change is driving increasing demand for non-credit, certificate, and custom programs. Non-credit and certificate programs directly serve an audience of *learners* seeking skills and credentials for professional advancement. The School of Professional Studies is building a portfolio of such offerings, focused on Brown's areas of academic excellence and also including selected other areas of high demand. Custom programs serve a *corporate* audience, providing customized learning programs to employees of a given corporation. In these relationships, we again center our offerings on Brown's areas of excellence and selected additional topics in high demand.

SPS now offers four open-enrollment programs in leadership and performance coaching, coaching for leaders, communication and pandemic problem-solving. Student satisfaction is high for the programs that have been completed, and we expect continued growth in enrollments. We have similarly delivered five custom corporate programs, with a combination of content from Brown faculty and adjunct faculty for companies such as the JSW Group, IBM Security, Citizens Bank, and Novarica. Our goal is to add 2-4 new open enrollment and 2-4 new corporate programs each year, while maintaining successful previous offerings.