

Political Science, PhD (Boston)

The Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science is grounded in the core fields of the discipline—American government and politics, comparative politics, international relations, and public policy. Students identify a primary and secondary field as areas of emphasis. The curriculum introduces students to the core fields and also seeks to develop their research skills through a series of methods courses. Students may develop a traditional, academic focus in one of the fields, or they may combine it with public policy to highlight a policy orientation. The program focuses on preparing students to be academic scholars and teachers as well as practitioners in research and public service. The PhD degree includes completion of required courses, passing a written and oral comprehensive examination, and the successful defense of the dissertation before a faculty committee.

Credit Requirements and Advanced Standing

Students entering with a bachelor's degree must complete 56 semester hours. Students currently in the MA or MPA program and accepted into the PhD program before completing the MA or MPA must complete 56 semester hours as well as all curriculum requirements of the PhD program.

Students entering with a master's degree may receive advanced standing for relevant prior coursework but must complete a minimum of 40 semester hours. Students entering with a Northeastern MA in political science or international affairs must complete a minimum of 24 semester hours while also satisfying all PhD course requirements. Master's-level coursework that results in advanced standing is evaluated by the graduate program director to determine its applicability to the PhD curriculum.

Doctoral Degree Candidacy

Doctoral degree candidacy is attained after successfully completing all coursework, comprehensive examination, and the dissertation proposal defense.

Academic Standing/Progress

All doctoral students must maintain an overall cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of 3.500 while making progress toward the degree requirements. Students who fall below any applicable standard for two consecutive semesters are subject to dismissal from the graduate program. Additionally, receipt of financial support administered by the department, college, or university is contingent on satisfactory academic progress toward the degree and specific guidelines as published in the terms of award. Students who have ungraded courses or courses graded as incomplete risk no longer being eligible for financial aid awards.

Language Proficiency

Students who conduct research in a language other than English must demonstrate proficiency as necessary for completion of the dissertation. Language courses do not count as electives.

Program Requirements

Complete all courses and requirements listed below unless otherwise indicated.

Milestones

- Annual review
- Comprehensive examination
- Dissertation committee
- Dissertation proposal
- Dissertation proposal oral defense
- Language (as determined by committee)
- PhD candidacy
- Dissertation defense

Core Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Seminars		
Complete 12 semester hours from the following (complete both field seminars in the two areas in which you wish to take the comprehensive exams):		12
POLS 7204	Seminar in Public Policy	
POLS 7205	Seminar in American Government and Politics	
POLS 7206	Seminar in Comparative Politics	
POLS 7207	Seminar in International Relations	
Inquiry and Design		
INSH 6300	Research Methods in the Social Sciences	4
Quantitative Techniques		
INSH 6500	Statistical Analysis	4

INSH 7400	Quantitative Analysis	4
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Advanced methods courses from other disciplines may be chosen in consultation with your faculty advisor.

Electives

Courses from other disciplines may be chosen in consultation with your faculty advisor.

Code	Title	Hours
Complete 32 semester hours in the following:		
POLS 7200 to POLS 7990		32

Dissertation

Code	Title	Hours
Exam Preparation		
POLS 8960	Exam Preparation—Doctoral (Only required for PhD students who have completed coursework but have yet to complete the comprehensive exam. Required for students who must maintain full-time status while completing thesis or comprehensive exam.)	

Research

POLS 9986	Research (To be completed during the proposal/prospectus phase prior to reaching candidacy.)	
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Dissertation

POLS 9990	Dissertation Term 1	
POLS 9991	Dissertation Term 2	

Dissertation Continuation

Following completion of POLS 9990 and POLS 9991, registration in the following class is required in each semester (including the summer if the dissertation is submitted in the summer) until the dissertation is completed:

POLS 9996	Dissertation Continuation	
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Program Credit/GPA Requirements

56 total semester hours required

Minimum 3.500 GPA required

Advanced Entry Program Requirements

Complete all courses and requirements listed below.

Milestones

Annual review

Comprehensive examination

Dissertation committee

Dissertation proposal

Dissertation proposal oral defense

Language (as determined by committee)

PhD candidacy

Dissertation defense

Core Requirements

Consult the graduate program director regarding which major-required courses apply to your individual plan of study.

Code	Title	Hours
Seminar		
Complete 12 semester hours from the following: ¹		12
POLS 7204	Seminar in Public Policy	
POLS 7205	Seminar in American Government and Politics	
POLS 7206	Seminar in Comparative Politics	
POLS 7207	Seminar in International Relations	
Inquiry and Design		
INSH 6300	Research Methods in the Social Sciences	4
Quantitative Techniques		
INSH 6500	Statistical Analysis	4

or INSH 7400	Quantitative Analysis	
INSH 7500	Advanced Quantitative Analysis	4
Advanced methods courses from other disciplines may be chosen in consultation with your faculty adviser.		

Electives

Code	Title	Hours
Complete 0-16 semester hours in the following. Courses from other disciplines may be chosen in consultation with your faculty adviser.		0-16
POLS 7200 to POLS 7990		

Dissertation

Code	Title	Hours
Exam Preparation		
POLS 8960	Exam Preparation—Doctoral (Only required for PhD students who have completed coursework but have yet to complete the comprehensive exam.)	0
Research		
POLS 9986	Research (To be completed during the proposal/prospectus phase prior to reaching candidacy.)	0
Dissertation		
POLS 9990	Dissertation Term 1	
POLS 9991	Dissertation Term 2	

Dissertation Continuation

Following completion of POLS 9990 and POLS 9991, registration in the following class is required in each semester (including the summer if the dissertation is submitted in summer) until the dissertation is completed:

POLS 9996	Dissertation Continuation
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Program Credit/GPA Requirements

24-40 total semester hours required
Minimum 3.500 GPA required

¹ You must complete both field seminars in the two areas you wish to take the comprehensive exams in.