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 all four 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 is designed to prepare students to be academic scholars and teachers as well as practitioners in research and public service. The PhD degree requires 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 master's degree from outside Northeastern may receive advanced standing for prior course work but must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours. Students entering with a Northeastern MA in political science must complete a minimum of 18 semester hours while also satisfying all PhD course requirements. Students entering with a Northeastern MPA degree must complete a minimum of 6 semester hours while also satisfying all PhD course requirements. Students currently in the MA or MPA program and accepted into the PhD before completing the MA or MPA must complete 48 semester hours.

Doctoral Degree Candidacy
Doctoral degree candidacy is attained after successful completion of all course work and passing written and oral comprehensive examinations.

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
For students who conduct research in a language other than English, he or she 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.