The PhD program is designed to attract students who wish to develop a broad base of sociological knowledge, such as would equip students to embark on academic careers in leading institutions of higher education. The PhD program boasts a wide array of curricular strengths and diverse methodological offerings, all of which draw upon the department’s emphasis on the study of social inequalities along lines of race, class, and gender. Faculty expertise ranges widely from domestic U.S. concerns to issues that affect groups, regions, and societies on a global scale.

The PhD program is organized around four key areas of specialization:

- Globalization
- Urban Sociology
- Sociology of Gender
- Environment and Health

In addition to the graduate courses offered in the areas of specialization, the program offers a strong foundation in both theory (classical and contemporary) and methods (quantitative and qualitative). Reflecting the program’s distinctive emphasis on social inequalities, students are required to select a core elective in this field, choosing from a list of approved courses maintained by the department (e.g., Social Psychology of Stratification; Class Structure and Social Inequality). As students complete their core requirements, they also work closely with individual faculty members to advance their work within one of the department’s standing areas of specialization.

In the latter case, a student may petition the graduate committee to construct their own areas of specialization (pending departmental approval) and have completed area examinations in a host of subfields. Among these are environmental justice, political economy of global capitalism, theoretical criminology, feminist theory, political sociology, social psychology, sociology of violence, and immigration, among many others.

The PhD program is designed to admit relatively small numbers of graduate students each year, which affords students the opportunity to forge close working relationships with the faculty. Our faculty and graduate students work together in a number of interdisciplinary research projects, programs, and centers, including the Social Science Environmental Health Research Institute; the Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict; the Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy; the Urban and Regional Policy; the (http://catalog.northeastern.edu/graduate/social-sciences-humanities/sociology/sociology-phd/institute%20on%20Urban%20Health%20Research%20and%20Practice) Institute on Urban Health Research and Practice; the Environmental Justice Research Collaborative; the Institute on Race and Justice; and the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program. Many of the faculty in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology have additional interests and are affiliated with other departments on campus, including environmental studies; law and public policy; Latino, Latin American, and Caribbean studies; African-American studies; international affairs, Jewish studies; and criminal justice. Students who wish to work with faculty in other disciplines are encouraged to enlist the aid of the sociology graduate director or their advisors in contacting individual faculty members.

Admissions

Students interested in the PhD apply directly to that program. Students admitted without a master’s degree earn the MA in sociology en route once PhD course work is completed. Please note that all applicants for the doctoral program are required to submit a writing sample that should consist of written materials that demonstrate their capacity for scholarship at the doctoral level. (Copies of several course or term papers or a copy of a master’s thesis or paper are appropriate.)

Theory Examination

Students entering the graduate program must take a theory qualifying examination at the conclusion of their first year of study during the spring semester. The theory qualifying examination is a standard exam taken by all students in the same cohort. The exam is graded on a pass/fail basis. Students who fail the examination may take it a second time but will not be allowed to enroll for course work beyond the 30-semester-hour MA requirement or their first year of PhD residence (whichever case applies) until successfully completing the qualifying exam. Students who fail the examination on their second attempt will be asked to leave the program.

Course Requirements

As prerequisites, all doctoral candidates are expected to have completed the core methodology and theory requirements for the Master of Arts in Sociology.

- Foundations of Social Theory
- Foundations of Social Theory 1

Doctoral candidates are also required to complete two advanced methods classes from a list of approved courses maintained by the department. Finally, doctoral students must take a course in the area of social inequality, choosing from a list of approved courses maintained by the department.

Students entering with a bachelor’s degree complete 60 semester hours. Students entering with a master’s degree complete a minimum of 28 semester hours beyond the master’s degree.

Degree Candidacy

To enter into degree candidacy, the student must have earned a Master of Arts degree or its departmental semester-hour equivalent, passed the qualifying examination, established a graduate committee of three faculty members from the sociology department, and successfully completed the candidacy examination.

Once students complete doctoral course work, they will register for the following courses in the following sequence:

- Exam Preparation—Doctoral (SOCL 8960)
Preparation once. Even if a student is unable to complete their first comprehensive exam during this time frame, they will not register for Exam Preparation again.

- Research (SOCL 9986) The next semester, students will register for Research, during which their second comprehensive examination should be completed. Upon completion of both comprehensive examinations, students will have achieved PhD degree candidacy, be certified by the graduate school, and will have five years to complete the dissertation.
- Dissertation (SOCL 9990) Upon achieving PhD degree candidacy, students will register for two consecutive semesters of Dissertation, during which they should complete and defend their dissertation proposal.
- Dissertation Continuation (SOCL 9996) Following the successful defense of their dissertation proposal, students will register for Dissertation Continuation for their remaining semesters until the dissertation is approved by the graduate school and submitted electronically to Proquest. Students do not have to register for Dissertation Continuation during the summer unless that is when their dissertation defense occurs.

**Program Requirements**

**Bachelor's Degree Entrance**

Complete all courses and requirements listed below unless otherwise indicated.

**Milestones**

- Qualifying examination
- Annual review
- Two field comprehensive examinations
- Dissertation committee
- Dissertation proposal
- Dissertation defense

**Core Requirements**

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<td>SOCL 7200</td>
<td>Foundations of Social Theory 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCL 7201</td>
<td>Foundations of Social Theory 2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSH 6500</td>
<td>Statistical Analysis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCL 7211</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>or INSH 6300</td>
<td>Research Methods in the Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCL 7263</td>
<td>Social Psychology of Stratification</td>
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**Advanced Methods**

- Complete 8 semester hours from the following: 8
  - INSH 7400 Quantitative Analysis
  - SOCL 7220 Seminar in Qualitative Analysis
  - or INSH 6302 Qualitative Methods
  - CRIM 7316 Advanced Topics in Methods
  - PHTH 6320 Qualitative Methods in Health and Illness
  - PPUA 6509 Techniques of Program Evaluation

**Electives**

Complete 32 semester hours in the following subject area: 32

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