

Mathematics, PhD

Course Requirements

Students entering with a bachelor's degree are required to take 64 semester hours of course work divided between foundational and advanced offerings. Students entering the program will be allowed to place out of some (possibly all) of the eight basic-level courses; the graduate coordinator together with the first-year graduate advisor will determine the allowable course substitutions and will advise the student which foundational courses to take. Students may satisfy requirements for Algebra 1 (MATH 5111) and Analysis 1: Functions of One Variable (MATH 5101) by taking qualifying exams in algebra 1 and in analysis 1 at the start of the program. Students may satisfy foundational course requirements if they demonstrate proficiency by passing an assessment exam in the course at the beginning of the semester or by demonstrating that they have taken a similar course and have adequate knowledge of the course material (syllabus and transcript are required; a brief oral examination is also required in that case). Academic advising will happen just before the start of each term and during the add/drop period in order to plan a student's course registration for the term. A complete listing of foundational and advanced courses is available from the Department of Mathematics and the graduate dean's office. Students are not permitted to register for more than two "readings" courses and three "topics" courses for credit toward the degree without explicit permission from the graduate dean. A minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.000 is required for degree conferral.

Teaching Requirement

Some teaching experience is required while in the program. Students must attend university-led TA training at the start of the program; attend a one-semester TA training course conducted by faculty from the Department of Mathematics teaching committee; spend one semester shadowing faculty in the undergraduate classroom; and perform recitations and grading for the undergraduate course they are shadowing.

Qualifying Exams

Qualifying exam sessions are given once in spring and once in fall. Students will be required to pass four qualifying exams: algebra 1, analysis 1, and two other exams. The possible additional topics for qualifying exams are algebra 2, analysis 2, combinatorics, geometry, ordinary differential equations, partial differential equations, probability, statistics, topology, and algebraic geometry. A qualifying exam may be taken twice by any student. Additional attempts may be allowed at the discretion of the graduate committee with permission from the graduate dean in the College of Science. Two qualifying exams should be passed no later than the end of the second year and all four by the end of the third year.

Doctoral Candidacy

PhD candidacy is reached when all of the following conditions are met:

- Completion of eight advanced courses
- Identification of an unsolved research problem
- Successful passing of four qualifying exams
- Assignment of PhD supervisor and creation of a 1-page initial plan
- Completion of a 3-page plan of research
- Completion of a 10-page progress report and a one-hour defense of proposal, presented to supervisor and three faculty members of graduate committee

Dissertation Requirement

Each candidate must complete a dissertation that embodies the results of extended research and makes an original contribution to the field. This work should give evidence of the candidate's ability to carry out independent investigation and interpret, in a logical manner, the results of the research. There are two stages to this process:

- **Stage 1:** Students in the PhD program must have a dissertation supervisor within two years after joining the PhD program. The department views the failure of a student to find a supervisor within two years of joining the PhD program with concern and considers this sufficient cause to review the student's status in the PhD program. The process of obtaining a dissertation supervisor always involves two choices—the student chooses the supervisor, and the supervisor chooses the student. For this reason, the department does not guarantee a dissertation supervisor for every student, but the department recognizes its responsibility to help the student find a satisfactory match. This aid is usually provided by the student's graduate advisor, who should be familiar with the student's progress in finding a dissertation supervisor. The dissertation supervisor guides the student's further education as well as directs the student's dissertation. The dissertation itself must represent an original solution of a problem in the chosen area of mathematics that makes a significant contribution to the mathematical knowledge in that area. Students must enroll in Dissertation or Dissertation Continuation while fulfilling the dissertation requirements.
- **Stage 2 (dissertation defense):** The final oral examination on the dissertation is held in accordance with university regulations and given by a dissertation committee of four faculty members (three from the university, including the supervisor, and one from outside Northeastern University). The dissertation supervisor should propose this dissertation committee to the graduate committee for its approval at least one month before the PhD dissertation defense.

Program Requirements

Bachelor's Degree Entry

Complete all courses and requirements listed below unless otherwise indicated.

Milestones

Four qualifying examinations
 Annual review
 Teaching requirement
 Doctoral candidacy
 Dissertation committee
 Dissertation proposal
 Progress report and presentation
 Dissertation defense

Prerequisites

Code	Title	Hours
Algebra and Analysis		
MATH 5101	Analysis 1: Functions of One Variable	4
MATH 5111	Algebra 1	4

Tracks

Complete one of the following three tracks:

- Pure Track (p. 2)
- Discrete Track (p. 2)
- Probability and Statistics Track (p. 3)

PURE TRACK

Code	Title	Hours
Analysis		
MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables	4
Algebra		
MATH 5112	Algebra 2	4
Foundational Courses		
Complete up to 16 semester hours from the following:		16
MATH 5121	Topology 1	
MATH 7202	Partial Differential Equations 1	
MATH 7221	Topology 2	
MATH 7233	Graph Theory	
MATH 7241	Probability 1	
MATH 7302	Partial Differential Equations 2	
MATH 7335	Discrete Geometry 2	
MATH 7341	Probability 2	
Advanced Course Work		
Complete 32 semester hours from the advanced coursework list. Only two readings and three topics courses are allowed. (p. 3)		32

DISCRETE TRACK

Code	Title	Hours
Algebra		
MATH 5112	Algebra 2	4
Probability		
MATH 7241	Probability 1	4
Foundational Courses		
Complete up to 16 semester hours from the following:		16
MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables	
MATH 5111	Algebra 1	

MATH 5112	Algebra 2
MATH 7202	Partial Differential Equations 1
MATH 7203	Numerical Analysis 1
MATH 7205	Numerical Analysis 2
MATH 7221	Topology 2
MATH 7233	Graph Theory
MATH 7341	Probability 2
MATH 7342	Mathematical Statistics
MATH 7343	Applied Statistics

Advanced Course Work

Complete 32 semester hours from the advanced coursework list. Only two readings and three topics courses are allowed. 32
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PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS TRACK

Code	Title	Hours
Analysis		
Complete 4 semester hours from the following:		4
MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables	
MATH 7203	Numerical Analysis 1	
Probability		
MATH 7241	Probability 1	4
or MATH 7342	Mathematical Statistics	

Foundational Courses

Complete up to 16 semester hours from the following:		16
MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables	
MATH 5112	Algebra 2	
MATH 7202	Partial Differential Equations 1	
MATH 7203	Numerical Analysis 1	
MATH 7205	Numerical Analysis 2	
MATH 7221	Topology 2	
MATH 7233	Graph Theory	
MATH 7241	Probability 1	
MATH 7341	Probability 2	
MATH 7342	Mathematical Statistics	
MATH 7343	Applied Statistics	

Advanced Course Work

Complete 32 semester hours from the advanced coursework list. Only two readings and three topics courses are allowed. 32
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Advanced Coursework List

Code	Title	Hours
MATH 7234	Optimization and Complexity	
MATH 7301	Functional Analysis	
MATH 7303	Complex Manifolds	
MATH 7315	Algebraic Number Theory	
MATH 7316	Lie Algebras	
MATH 7317	Modern Representation Theory	
MATH 7320	Modern Algebraic Geometry	
MATH 7321	Topology 3	
MATH 7344	Regression, ANOVA, and Design	
MATH 7346 to MATH 7361		
MATH 7371	Morse Theory	
MATH 7374	Riemannian Geometry and General Relativity	
MATH 7435	Discrete Geometry 3	
MATH 7976 to MATH 8986		

MATH 9984	Research
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Topics

Only three topics courses are allowed.

MATH 7362	Topics in Algebra
MATH 7364	Topics in Representation Theory
MATH 7376	Topics in Differential Geometry
MATH 7381	Topics in Combinatorics
MATH 7382	Topics in Probability
MATH 7392	Topics in Geometry

Readings

Only two readings courses are allowed.

MATH 7721	Readings in Topology
MATH 7733	Readings in Graph Theory
MATH 7734	Readings in Algebra
MATH 7735	Readings in Algebraic Geometry
MATH 7736	Readings in Discrete Geometry
MATH 7741	Readings in Probability and Statistics
MATH 7751	Readings: Analysis
MATH 7771	Readings in Geometry

Dissertation

Code	Title	Hours
MATH 9990	Dissertation Term 1	
MATH 9991	Dissertation Term 2	

Program Credit/GPA Requirements

64 total semester hours required

Minimum 3.000 GPA required

Advanced Entry Program Requirements**Course Requirements**

Advanced students who enter the PhD program with a master's degree (or equivalent) will be allowed to place out of some (possibly all) of the eight basic-level courses; the graduate coordinator together with the first-year graduate advisor will determine the allowable course substitutions and will advise the student which foundational courses to take. Students may satisfy requirements for Algebra 1 (MATH 5111) and Analysis 1: Functions of One Variable (MATH 5101) by taking qualifying exams in algebra 1 and in analysis 1 at the start of the program. Students may satisfy foundational course requirements if they demonstrate proficiency by passing an assessment exam in the course at the beginning of the semester or by demonstrating that they have taken a similar course and have adequate knowledge of the course material (syllabus and transcript are required; a brief oral examination is also required in that case). Academic advising will happen just before the start of each term and during the add/drop period in order to plan a student's course registration for the term. A complete listing of foundational and advanced courses is available from the Department of Mathematics and the graduate dean's office. Students are not permitted to register for more than two "readings" courses and three "topics" courses for credit toward the degree without explicit permission from the graduate dean. A minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.000 is required for degree conferral.

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Complete all courses and requirements listed below unless otherwise indicated.

Milestones

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- Annual review
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- Doctoral candidacy
- Dissertation committee
- Dissertation proposal
- Progress report and presentation
- Dissertation defense

Code	Title	Hours
Complete 0–16 semester hours of the following courses:		
MATH 5101	Analysis 1: Functions of One Variable	
MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables	
MATH 5111	Algebra 1	
MATH 5112	Algebra 2	

Tracks

Complete one of the following three tracks:

- Pure Track (p. 2)
- Discrete Track (p. 2)
- Probability and Statistics Track (p. 3)

PURE TRACK

Code	Title	Hours
Foundational Courses		
Complete 0–16 semester hours from the following:		
MATH 5121	Topology 1	0-16
MATH 7202	Partial Differential Equations 1	

MATH 7221	Topology 2
MATH 7233	Graph Theory
MATH 7241	Probability 1
MATH 7302	Partial Differential Equations 2
MATH 7335	Discrete Geometry 2
MATH 7341	Probability 2

Advanced Course Work

Complete 32 semester hours from the advanced coursework list. Only two readings and three topics courses are allowed. 32
(p. 3)

DISCRETE TRACK

Code	Title	Hours
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Foundational Courses

Complete 0–16 semester hours from the following: 0 - 16

MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables
MATH 5111	Algebra 1
MATH 5112	Algebra 2
MATH 7202	Partial Differential Equations 1
MATH 7203	Numerical Analysis 1
MATH 7205	Numerical Analysis 2
MATH 7221	Topology 2
MATH 7233	Graph Theory
MATH 7341	Probability 2
MATH 7342	Mathematical Statistics
MATH 7343	Applied Statistics

Advanced Course Work

Complete 32 semester hours from the advanced coursework list. Only two readings and three topics courses are allowed. 32
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PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS TRACK

Code	Title	Hours
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Foundational Courses

Complete 0–16 semester hours from the following: 0 - 16

MATH 5102	Analysis 2: Functions of Several Variables
MATH 5112	Algebra 2
MATH 7202	Partial Differential Equations 1
MATH 7203	Numerical Analysis 1
MATH 7205	Numerical Analysis 2
MATH 7221	Topology 2
MATH 7233	Graph Theory
MATH 7241	Probability 1
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MATH 7381	Topics in Combinatorics
MATH 7382	Topics in Probability
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Readings

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MATH 7721	Readings in Topology
MATH 7733	Readings in Graph Theory
MATH 7734	Readings in Algebra
MATH 7735	Readings in Algebraic Geometry
MATH 7736	Readings in Discrete Geometry
MATH 7741	Readings in Probability and Statistics
MATH 7751	Readings: Analysis
MATH 7771	Readings in Geometry

Dissertation

Code	Title	Hours
MATH 9990	Dissertation Term 1	
MATH 9991	Dissertation Term 2	

Program Credit/GPA Requirements

32–64 total semester hours required

Minimum 3.000 GPA required