

Philosophy PhD Map

Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies

GRAD MAP FOR PhD STUDENTS 

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in PHILOSOPHY?

The Department of Philosophy at Queen's University has faculty working in a wide variety of fields, including political philosophy, ethics, bioethics, feminism, contemporary metaphysics and epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of science, continental philosophy, and the history of philosophy. The department's colloquium, which meets weekly during the term, affords the opportunity for graduate students to interact with distinguished visiting scholars in a wide variety of philosophical fields.

Why QUEEN'S?

Queen's offers high quality graduate programs that aspire to give students both a solid general education in philosophy and opportunities for specialized work on topics of students' choosing.

"The Philosophy department is both intimate and vibrant – offering the benefits of smaller classes with the advantages of a diverse faculty."

– Christine Esselmont, MA, PhD



Queen's Philosophy faculty are very productive in a broad range of areas of research. The small size of the graduate programs allows for individual attention and a collegial atmosphere.

At Queen's, the philosophy graduate students form an active and supportive community. They organize their own colloquium series at which they present work-in-progress, and they participate in departmental reading and research groups, such as the Political Philosophy Reading Group that meets regularly throughout the year. All students are members of the Philosophy Graduate Student Association, which selects representatives to serve on various departmental committees. The historic city of Kingston, with its vibrant downtown, is a great place to live and study, and the University is proud of its attractive campus situated on beautiful Lake Ontario.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): coursework and thesis.

RESEARCH Areas

- Applied Ethics
- Epistemology & Metaphysics
- Ethics
- Philosophy of Language
- Social & Political Philosophy

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.

Visit the [Philosophy Department website](#) to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members' research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact them and tell them about your interest in graduate work, area of research interest, and related experience. The email correspondence is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise.



GRADUATE STUDIES AND
POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS

Philosophy PhD Map

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)



YEAR I

YEAR II

YEAR III

YEAR IV

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Key priorities include coursework, identifying your research interests, and confirming your supervisor and committee. Consider how your coursework can contribute to defining your dissertation research.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.

- Write and defend your thesis proposal, and embark on your substantive research.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of [School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development](#).
- Present work at the Departmental Research Seminar.
- Participate in the student-run speaker series: the Graduate Student Colloquium.

- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out [SGSPA writing camps](#), such as Dissertation Boot Camp and Dissertation on the Lake.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or at conferences and work with supervisor to prepare for defence.
- Review submission and examination guidelines.
- Secure necessary oral defence accommodations.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete [CORE online module](#) on research ethics if doing research regarding sensitive topics.
- Apply to SSHRC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.

- Present your work at graduate conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean's Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as [Waterloo PGSA Conference](#), [University of Alberta Philosophy Graduate and Postgraduate Conference](#), [York University's Graduate Conferences in Philosophy](#), or [University of Calgary Graduate Philosophy Conference](#).

- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Contact the [Queen's Media Centre](#) for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work. List yourself on the [Arts and Science University Research website](#).

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty, or university committees. Talk to the [Philosophy Graduate Student Association \(PGSA\)](#) for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen's Journal, CFRC, and the SGSPA Blog. Look in the [AMS Clubs Directory](#).
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees.
- For help with teaching, get support from the [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#). Enrol in SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

- Apply to teach as a departmental teaching fellow in Year IV.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, [School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development](#), Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills. Investigate internships from [MITACS](#) and other sources.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate.

- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, and cultural studies groups, such as the Coalition of Kingston Communities, Vision for Kingston, local food banks, Elizabeth Fry Society, Agnes Etherington Art Gallery, or the Marine Museum.
- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities.

- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate.

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through [Queens Connects](#) on LinkedIn, the [Queen's Alumni Association](#), professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Consider signing up for the PhD-Community Initiative program run by the SGSPA.

- Consider joining professional associations like the [Canadian Philosophical Association](#).
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding a career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a [Career Services workshop](#) or meet with a career educator and coach for help.
- Start reading publications like [University Affairs](#) and the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#). Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs Career Week to explore your career pathways.

- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by [Queens Connects](#) on LinkedIn to connect with Queen's alumni. For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

- Start putting together your resume and begin your job search plan.
- Start focusing on non-academic areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your industry resume and begin your job search plan.

- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures.
- If considering jobs abroad, research possible immigration regulations. If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an [International Student Advisor](#).

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Philosophy can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:

- **Knowledge and technical skills**
- **Effective communication skills** in multiple forms for diverse audiences
- **Information management:** prioritize, organize, and synthesize large amounts of information
- **Time management:** Meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
- **Project management:** develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
- **Creativity and innovation**
- **Perseverance**
- **Independence** and experience as a **collaborative** worker
- **Awareness**, an understanding of sound **ethical** practices, **social responsibility**, **responsible research**, and **cultural sensitivity**
- **Professionalism** in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- **Leadership:** initiative and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?

A PhD in Philosophy can take your career in many directions. In Canada, less than 40% of all PhDs will work in post-secondary education – the majority will work in industry, government, or non-profits.

- Academia and teaching
- Government sector
- Journalism
- Law
- Private sector

Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

How to use this map

Use the 5 rows of the map to explore possibilities and plan for success in the five overlapping areas of career and academics. The map just offers suggestions – you don't have to do it all! To make your own custom map, use the [My Grad Map](#) tool.

Graduate Studies FAQs

How do I make the most of my time at Queen's?

Use the Grad Map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. Everyone's journey is different - the ideas on the maps are just suggestions to help you explore possibilities. For more support with your professional development, take advantage of the SGSPA professional development framework and the new [Individual Development Plan \(IDP\)](#) process to set customized goals to help you get career ready when you graduate.

Where can I get help?

Queen's provides you with a broad range of support services from your first point of contact with the University through to graduation. Ranging from help with academics and careers, to physical, emotional, or spiritual resources – our welcoming environment offers the programs and services you need to be successful, both academically and personally. Check out the [SGSPA website](#) for available resources.

What is the community like?

At Queen's, graduate students from all disciplines learn and discover in a close-knit intellectual community. You will find friends, peers and support among the graduate students enrolled in Queen's more than 130 graduate programs within 50+ departments & research centres. With the world's best scholars, prize-winning professional development opportunities, excellent funding packages and life in the affordable, historic waterfront city of Kingston, Queen's offers a wonderful environment for graduate studies. Queen's is an integral part of the Kingston community, with the campus nestled in the core of the city, only a 10-minute walk to downtown with its shopping, dining and waterfront. For more about Kingston's history and culture, see Queen's University's [Discover Kingston](#) page.

Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- MA in Philosophy or equivalent.
- **Grade requirements:** an A- average is normally required to be competitive.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Statement of Interest
- Writing sample (maximum 10-15 pages)
- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the [English language proficiency requirements](#) in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The following minimum scores are required: (1) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30); Speaking (22/30); Reading (22/30); Listening (20/30). Applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score, or (2) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score and a 7.0 for each test band), or (3) PTE Academics: 65, or (4) CAEL CE -70 (minimum overall score).

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- **Application due:** February 2 is the deadline to qualify for funding, but applications will continue to be accepted beyond this date.
- **Notification of acceptance:** Early March.

Before you start your application, please review the [graduate studies application process](#).

What about FUNDING?

Minimum funding guarantee for PhD students is \$23,000. The department will nominate students for internal awards.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC, and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a one time \$10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' information on [awards and scholarships](#), or see what awards are offered through the Philosophy Department.

