School of Political Studies

What do I need to know to apply?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- M.A. in Political Science, Political Studies, or an equivalent.
- Grade requirements: minimum A-average.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the TOEFL requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening.

How do I find a supervisor?

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

Visit the Political Studies Department website to read about faculty, and learn more about potential interests. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work and related experience. This is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise. Meet with your potential supervisor at departmental events for prospective students.

What about funding?

The minimum funding guarantee for students 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
- Policy analytics
- Law
- International organisations
- Politics

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

Where Can a Graduate Degree Take Me?

A PhD in Political Studies can take your career in many directions:

- Academia
- Policy analytics
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Ph.D. Career Outcomes in Canada

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Public Sector 11%

Health 11%

Management, Business & Finance 15%

Other PhD 6%

Other 14%

Professor 19%

Academia 21%

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Why GRADUATE STUDIES in POLITICAL STUDIES?

The Department of Political Studies at Queen's University has long been known for its graduate programs. We are small enough to provide our students with a highly personalized graduate experience, and our faculty are strong, diverse, and well recognized for their research so that we can provide you with a well-rounded education that equips our graduates with a strong basis for a wide range of careers. The department is particularly well known for its strength in the study of ethically divided and diverse societies.

Why QUEENS’?

“Upon setting foot in the Department, I found an open and supportive community of graduate students, as well as a genuinely helpful and caring faculty. The ability to contact fellow graduate students and faculty forced me to stay focused on research and helped me to complete the dissertation in a timely manner.” — Rémi Léger, PhD

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.

Why KINGSTON?

Described by students as both “quiet” and “eclectic,” Kingston is big enough to provide all the conveniences of modern life, and small enough for students, staff, and faculty to feel instantly comfortable and at home. Kingston 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, culture, see Queen’s University’s Discover Kingston page.

Ph.D. Map FAQs

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KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- Application deadline: January 22
- Notification of acceptance: from late March to early April

Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

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Political Studies PH.D. MAP

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

YEAR I
- Complete your substantive research.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) Annual Conference or the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN).

YEAR II
- Continue to research and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.

YEAR III
- Complete and defend your dissertation.
- Continue to pursue publication options for your research.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Consider attending conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

YEAR I
- 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.

YEAR II
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking so your thesis is understandable to the public.

YEAR III
- Continue to present at conferences.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in difficult forums, such as media, networking, and interviews. Get help with the Skills and Experience workshop.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

YEAR I
- Serve on departmental or university committees.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like Material Matters.

YEAR II
- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in the community.
- Start keeping an eportfolio of your skills, experiences, and competencies.

YEAR III
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queen's Connects on LinkedIn, the Queen's Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Political Science Association.
- Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

YEAR I
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, museums, and cultural studies groups, such as the Centre for Studies on Democracy and Diversity, the Centre for International and Defence Policy (CIDE), and the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.

YEAR II
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like Material Matters.

YEAR III
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queen's Connects on LinkedIn, the Queen's Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
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LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

YEAR I
- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take the Career Services Career Planning workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like What Are You Going to Do With That? for advice on various career options.
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship. Explore different careers of interest by reading alumni profiles on the SGS website, and using Queen’s Connects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni or find alumni in various careers through Ask an Alum. For more information check out Career Cruising.

YEAR II
- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.

YEAR III
- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.
- Start focusing on non-academic areas of interest.
- 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.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- 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.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

YEAR I
- Policymaking: values and principles, ethical reasoning, outcome-oriented analysis, data collection and use, technology use

YEAR II
- Communication: effective and clear in written, oral and multimedia forms, for diverse audiences

YEAR III
- Information management: prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of information

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Time management: meet deadlines and responsibilities despite competing demands

PROJECT MANAGEMENT: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions

CREDIBILITY AND INNOVATION: address complex, multifaceted challenges

PERSISTENCE: work through challenges to achieve desired outcome

INDEPENDENCE: experience and as a collaborative worker

AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF ETHICAL PRACTICES, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

PROFESSIONALISM: in all aspects of work, research, and interactions

LEADERSHIP: initiative, vision, and experience leading people and discussions