

Sociology MA Map

Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies



GRAD MAP FOR MA STUDENTS →

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in SOCIOLOGY?

In general, a sociological approach engages with contemporary social problems and questions from a critical perspective. Students of sociology are trained to critically examine social dynamics and structures, and to engage with the formation of pathways towards social change. Our students at the MA level are trained (theoretically and methodologically) in advanced critical social analysis. Both micro and macro sociological approaches are covered.

The Sociology graduate program at Queen's has particular strengths in socio-legal studies and criminology, critical sociology, and surveillance and digital media. Most of our graduates from the MA program proceed to doctoral programs throughout Canada and beyond. Others move into law, social work, or take up employment in policy analysis and research. Many graduates of the MA program remark on the intimate, supportive and cohesive culture of the Department.

Why QUEEN'S?

In addition to the benefits of a small department where students receive ample attention from faculty and staff, inside the classroom and out, Sociology at Queen's offers an annual graduate student conference where MA students who are interested may engage in a typical conference format with many members of faculty and from the graduate program in attendance.



The Surveillance Studies Centre is a multi-disciplinary and international research centre affiliated with the Department. It offers several speakers series that have attracted leading figures in surveillance, including Edward Snowden. Its current streams include big data surveillance, drones, wearables, and social sorting.

Queen's is located in Kingston, which offers meaningful points of social and political engagement. Because of the significance Kingston holds in the federal penal system, there are many local associations concerned with prison transitions and reform. Some of our graduates work with the Elizabeth Frye Society, while others work within local prisons. There is a large and growing Boys and Girls club where members of the Queen's community interact on a regular basis. Some of our graduate students work with local shelters for women, and in feminist legal studies in Law at Queen's.

RESEARCH Areas/Streams

- Criminology and Law
- Power, Inequalities and Social Justice
- Media, Information and Surveillance

Visit the [Sociology Department website](#) to read [faculty profiles](#) and learn more about faculty members' research areas.

"Throughout my time here I felt challenged by my coursework and research, but also supported; overall the program offers an ideal environment for the intellectual and professional development of graduate students."

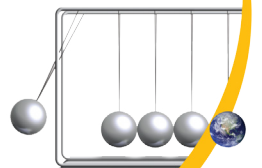
– Isabel Macquarrie, MA

Program STRUCTURE

The 2-year Master of Sociology offers 2 methods of completion:

- Method I (Thesis): Two core half courses, two other half courses, and a thesis weighted at half of the total program.
- Method II (Essay): Two core half courses, four other half courses, and an essay weighted at one-quarter of the total program.

School of Graduate Studies
Create an impact
www.queensu.ca/sgs



GETTING STARTED

INTERMEDIATE STAGE

WRAPPING UP

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Start with key priorities like developing your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, and doing your coursework.
- Consider how your course papers can contribute to your MA essay or thesis.
- Find your way through the academic process with help from departmental and [Expanding Horizons](#) professional development workshops, the department Grad Chair and the [SGS Habitat](#).

- Complete your coursework; begin to research and write your essay or thesis.

- Complete your essay or thesis.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Start to think about the audiences for your research.
- If you will be continuing graduate studies, apply for SSHRC and OGS funding.

- Attend or present at the Sociology Graduate Student [conference](#).
- Consider participating in the [3 Minute Thesis \(3MT\)](#) competition.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.

- Consider publication options for your research.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as the [Canadian Sociological Association Congress](#), [The American Criminology Society Annual Meeting](#), the [Society for Social Studies of Science Annual Meeting](#), and more.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Consider positions in student services, the [SGPS](#), or media outlets like the [Queen's Journal](#), [CFRC](#), and the [SGS Blog](#). Look in the [AMS Clubs Directory](#) for more ideas.
- Serve on departmental or university committees. Talk to the Departmental Committee graduate student representative for tips on getting involved.
- Check out professional development workshops from [Expanding Horizons](#).

- Start keeping an eportfolio of your skills, experiences and competencies.
- Use a Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant position to develop your research or teaching skills.
- For help with teaching, get support from the [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#). Enroll in [SGS901](#) or the [PUTL certificate](#) for more professional development in teaching and learning.

- 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](#).
- Check out opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills.
- Investigate internships from [Mitacs](#) and [other sources](#).

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as the [Elizabeth Fry Society](#), and the [Boys and Girls Club](#).
- Follow the Sociology Department on [Twitter](#).

- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like [Material Matters](#).
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking QUIC's [Intercultural Competency Certificate](#).
- If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an [International Student Advisor](#).

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through [QueensConnects](#) on LinkedIn, the [Queen's Alumni Association](#), professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a [Career Services workshop](#).
- Consider joining professional associations like the [Canadian Sociological Association](#).

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a [Career Services career planning workshop](#) or meeting with a career counsellor. Check out books like *So What Are You Going to do With That?* or *The Academic Job Search* from the [Career Resource Area](#) for advice on various career options.
- 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 Graduate Student [Career Week](#) to explore your career pathways.
- Check admission test deadlines if needed for further studies.

- Explore different careers of interest by reading [alumni profiles](#) on the SGS website, and using [QueensConnects](#) on LinkedIn to connect with Queen's alumni, or find alumni in various careers through "[Ask an Alum](#)".
- Check out the free online modules at [MyGradSkills](#) to help you plan your career.
- If you are considering a PhD, explore programs of interest reach out to faculty, and apply to PhD programs and external scholarships.

- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks. Start focusing on areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your CV or resume for potential positions of interest. Get help from Career Services with [job searching](#), [resumes](#), or [interviews](#).

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Knowledge and technical skills including:

- Qualitative/Quantitative research techniques to analyze social issues.
- Critical thinking to evaluate social problems and interactions by challenging common assumptions.
- Research design: to select and effectively deploy appropriate research designs for examining and interpreting a variety of social phenomena
- Program Evaluation to collect, evaluate and analyse information concerning the effectiveness of a wide range of projects and policies.
- Organizing critical debate and discussion to define, interpret and explain multifaceted current issues, and their implications for individual lives, social groups and institutions, by combining sociological knowledge with a critical and reflexive understanding of the complexities of present-day societies.
- Policy Analysis to considers the impact and unintended consequences of policies, and consider the role of social differentiation in creating conflict, social movements and social protest around policies.
- User research to understand individual and group understandings, behaviors, needs, and motivations through observation techniques, task analysis, and other feedback methodologies.

Essential transferable skills including:

- Communication of complex information and arguments about social issues in appropriate formats and a range of media and digital technologies.
- Teamwork/Leadership: working creatively by cooperating with others in a manner which recognizes diverse views, values and cultural positions.
- Information management: prioritizing, organizing and synthesizing large amounts of information
- Time management: meet deadlines despite competing demands
- Project management: developing ideas, gathering information, analyzing and appraising findings, drawing and acting on conclusions
- Creativity and innovation to address complex, multifaceted challenges
- Perseverance to work through challenges to achieve desired outcome
- Awareness and understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and cultural sensitivity
- Independence and experience as a collaborative worker
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions

WHERE CAN I GO?

Almost half of the Department's Master's graduates have chosen to pursue doctoral studies. Those who have not continued on to doctoral work have secured challenging positions commensurate with their advanced level skills as sociologists in:

- Research
- Policy Analysis
- Policing Analysis
- Policing and Corrections
- Marketing
- Social Justice Advocacy
- Health Care Administration
- Teaching

Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation. Visit the [Department of Sociology website](#) to see where the degree can take you.

Graduate Studies FAQs

How do I use this map?

Whether you are considering or have embarked on graduate studies at Queen's, use this map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. The map helps you explore possibilities, set goals and track your individual accomplishments. Everyone's journey is different – the guide offers options for finding your way at Queen's and setting the foundation for your future. To make your own customized map, use the online [My Grad Map](#) tool.

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 [SGS HABITAT](#) 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

- BA Honours undergraduate degree in Sociology or equivalent with a minimum B+ standing.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Writing Sample
- Statement of Interest

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- **Application deadline:** Our deadline for applications is February 1 for internal awards. However, in some cases, applications are considered before the Fall term begins, as long as space is available in the program.
- **Notification of acceptance:** Decisions are made in March.

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



What about FUNDING?

MA students are guaranteed a minimum of \$14,000 in the form of a Queen's Graduate Award and a Teaching Assistantship. Funding is guaranteed for 2 years.

Apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a \$5,000 top-up to Masters winners of federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies' information on [awards and scholarships](#), or see what awards are offered through the Sociology Department.



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