Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- BA Honours undergraduate degree and Master’s degree in Sociology or equivalent with a minimum A- standing.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Writing Sample
- Statement of Interest

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: 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?

PHD students are guaranteed a minimum of $21,000 which includes a Teaching Assistantship and a Queen’s Graduate Award. Funding is guaranteed for 4 years.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC, and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $10,000 award to winners of federal government tri-council awards for PhD students.

For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in SOCIOLOGY?

The Department focuses on critical social inquiry and in-depth research, offering students challenging projects and world-class resources to complete them. Our faculty members are all well-published scholars with national or international reputations, yet they still manage to maintain an open-door policy and establish supportive, mentoring relationships with students.

The Sociology graduate program at Queen’s has particular strengths in socio-legal studies and criminology, critical sociology, and surveillance and digital media. Graduates of our PhD program have an outstanding record of securing full-time academic positions and successful professional careers such as in law, social work, policy analysis, and corrections. Many graduates of the PhD program remain on the intimate, supportive, and cohesive culture of the Department with strong supervisory support.

Why QUEEN’S?

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.

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.

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Sociology PhD MAP *

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

YEAR I

• Key priorities include forming your Supervisory and Qualifying Exam committees, and coursework (normally completed in the first year).
• Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodations.
• Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.
• With your supervisor begin your list of Required Readings for your Qualifying Exam.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

• Think about audiences for your research.
• Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with living people or sensitive topics.
• Apply to SHRIR, OGS, and other funding.
• Attend conferences in your field.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

• Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Departmental Meeting graduate student representative for tips on getting involved.
• Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen's Journal, CFCR, and the SQ Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory.
• Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

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.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

• Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counselor for help. 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 look out for special events like Graduate Student Career Week to explore your career pathways.

YEAR II

• Complete your Qualifying Exam. Defend your thesis proposal. Submit ethics review application (if necessary).
• Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons workshops.
• Attend or present at the annual department Graduate student conference.

YEAR III

• Continue to research and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
• Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.
• Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING

• 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.
• Discuss career pathways, references letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

WHERE CAN I GO?

The majority of our PhD graduates who sought a position in academia has been able to secure tenure track appointments. Others first work places like the Mental Health Commission of Canada, adjust instructors, Ontario Provincial Government and a New York City based Think Tank. PhD graduates in Sociology, from Queen's are securing rewarding, full-time tenure track positions where they are able to draw upon all of their education, skills, and abilities to contribute to international scholarship and higher education. 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.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Advanced 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 multidisciplinary and international issues.
• Communication of complex information and arguments.
• Project management: developing ideas, gathering resources and overseeing the planning and completion of projects.
• Time management: meet deadlines and responsibilities.
• Empathy and cultural competence.
• Writing and editing services. Supports of communication.
• Office Management: organizing, scheduling, and handling correspondence.
• Professionalism in work, research, and interactions.

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 and responsibilities despite competing demands.
• Project management: developing ideas, gathering information, analyzing and approaching findings, drawing and acting on conclusions.
• Creativity and innovation to start, develop, and improve new businesses.
• Networking/Alliances: building relationships, pursuing business opportunities, and acquiring and maintaining business contacts.
• Awareness and understanding of sound ethical practices, cultural sensitivity, and the impact of cultural bias.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Thank you for reading our PhD MAP. If you would like more information, please contact one of our PhD MAP students or faculty members.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!

* This map is intended to provide suggestions for activities and careers, but everyone's abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.