Get to know
POLITICAL STUDIES

Politics is about power – who has it, how it is exercised by nation-states, individuals, groups, classes, or political parties, and how different interests are reconciled in and between communities. Political Studies is also concerned with institutions created to govern communities, as well as practices such as voting habits or protests, and how rules, behaviour and culture are created in societies. And since power in society is often dependent upon material resources, political scientists study the distribution of wealth, both within and between nations.

Students sharpen their debating skills at the Queen’s Model Parliament; they discuss international issues at the Queen’s Model UN or with the Queen’s International Affairs Association. Politics at Queen’s extends beyond the classroom.

Course HIGHLIGHTS

There are courses that focus on national politics such as Canadian Government, Mass Media and Politics in Canada, First Nations Politics and Politics in Quebec. And there are courses that look at politics in a global context such as International Politics, Middle East Politics, American Government, The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, and The United Nations. Then there are courses that focus on the process such as Comparative Politics: Democracy and Democratization, Law and the Governmental Process, Citizenship and Non-Citizenship, Elections, Public Opinion, and International Relations: Questions & Challenges.

“Queen’s Political Studies is widely recognized as one of the premier political studies departments in Canada.”

Degree OPTIONS

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
Major / Medial / Minor in Political Studies
Bachelor of Arts (General)
Internship option available

Queen’s ADMISSION

Students apply to Queen’s Arts (QA) through the OUAC (Ontario Universities Application Centre) website (ouac.on.ca). Secondary School prerequisites include six 4U and 4M courses, including a minimum of three 4U courses, one of which must be ENG4U. Applicants outside of Ontario may have additional requirements.

A Common START

Students in our Faculty are admitted into Arts, Science or Computing but the focus is on a common first year. Through self-exploration, and while you settle into university life, you have the chance to work with our advisors and faculty to uncover where your real interests and opportunities for success are. Sometimes that discovery happens fairly quickly, and for other students it takes some work and time before the “ah-ha!” happens – either way your first year at Queen’s will be a great experience.
# Political Studies Major Map

## 1ST YEAR

**GET THE COURSES YOU NEED**

- In first year take POLS 110. Each Plan will have at least one required first-year course, including minors. It is important to take a variety of first-year courses to keep as many pathways open as possible for you going into second year. For details see the Arts and Science Academic Calendar.
- Want to enhance your degree? Consider a certificate in Employment Relations or explore other certificates available.

**GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

- Join teams or clubs on campus such as the Queen's Model UN Team and the Queen's Debating Union (QMUN). Consider joining an on-campus political party.
- Apply to be a 1st-year intern with the AMS or ASUS. Look in the CCDQ or AMS Clubs Directory for more ideas.

**GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY**

- Volunteer on or off campus with different community organizations, such as the Queen's International Affairs Association (QIAA). Participate in events such as Queen's Model Parliament (QMP), Queen's Model UN (QMUN) and Queen's Model Court (QMC). Volunteer with The Journal, Queen’s student-run newspaper.

**GET THINKING GLOBALLY**

- The Queen’s University International Centre is your first stop to learn how to internationalize your degree or to leverage your existing cross-cultural experience.
- Speak to a QUIC advisor or get involved in their programs, events and training opportunities.
- Consider taking a language course as an elective.

**GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION**

- Grappling with program decisions? Go to Majors Night or get some help wondering about career options from Career Services.

## 2ND YEAR

**GET THE COURSES YOU NEED**

- In second year take POLS 250 and 200-level POLS option courses. If planning to go on exchange in third year, consider taking POLS 384 or 385 this year. Review prerequisites for taking 300 and 400-level courses. Consult the Political Studies homepage for other required POLS courses.
- Please see the Academic Calendar to ensure you are taking the correct courses.

**GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

- Look into summer jobs by talking to the department or Career Services about work through SWEF or Work Study.
- Consider applying to positions in student services or the Alma Mater Society. Write an article for publications related to politics such as Politicus or Inquire.

**GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY**

- Get involved with the Political Studies Department Student Council (DSC).
- Continue volunteering at clubs and extracurriculars. Consider contributing to University affairs by applying to serve on Arts and Science Faculty and University Senate Committees. Attend the Queen's Media and Journalism Conference (QJM).

**GET THINKING GLOBALLY**

- Is an exchange in your future? Start thinking about where you would like to study abroad. Apply in January for a 3rd year exchange through your Faculty's International Office. If exchange isn't for you, come talk to QUIC about some other options to gain international experience.

**GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION**

- Explore different careers of interest by reading books in the Career Services Information Area, such as Careers in International Affairs. For more information check out Career Cruising or by finding and connecting with alumni on LinkedIn.

## 3RD YEAR

**GET THE COURSES YOU NEED**

- In third year take POLS 384 and 385 and 300-level POLS option courses.
- Consider writing an Honours Undergraduate Thesis next year. In May, submit preferences for 400-level courses for next year.
- Need help mapping all of your core, option, supporting and elective courses (including those not listed above) to make sure you will have what you need to complete your degree? Use the Course Mapping Tool on the Arts and Science website.

**GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

- If interested, apply for an Undergraduate Student Summer Research Fellowship (USSRF). Consider applying to do a 12-16 month QUIP internship between your third and fourth year.
- Consider running for office in student government (ASUS, AMS). If interested, apply to positions in local and provincial government.

**GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY**

- Do targeted networking with alumni working in careers of interest by joining the LinkedIn group Queen's Connects. Check out Career Services networking workshops. Connect with professors at events or workshops hosted by the DSC.
- Attend talks in departmental speaker series. Help organize QMP, QMC, QMC, or QMM.

**GET THINKING GLOBALLY**

- Build your intercultural competence by getting involved with other cultures or by practicing or improving your language skills. Check QUIC’s resources for ideas to go abroad, and volunteer or attend one of their events.

**GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION**

- Start focusing on areas of interest. Research education requirements for careers of interest. If needed, prepare to take any required tests (like the LSAT or GRE) and get help thinking about grad school from Career Services.

## 4TH OR FINAL YEAR

**GET THE COURSES YOU NEED**

- Take your 4th year seminars and/or Honours Thesis. Complete POLS 384 and 385 if you have not, in your final year, done so already.
- By fourth year you should be working on your remaining option and elective courses. Make sure to map your minor and / or certificate(s) as well.
- Apply to graduate in SOLUS.

**GET RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

- Investigate requirements for full-time jobs or other opportunities related to careers of interest.
- Assess what experience you’re lacking and fill in gaps with volunteering, clubs, or internships – check out the Career Services skills workshop for help.

**GET CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY**

- Consider professional associations like Canadian Institute of International Affairs and Canadian Public Relations Society.
- Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Politics.

**GET THINKING GLOBALLY**

- Consider joining international trade organizations to gain knowledge of the global business environment by taking QUIP International Competency Certificates, and research possible immigration regulations.
- International students interested in staying in Canada can speak with an International Student Advisor.

**GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION**

- Apply to jobs or future education, or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, interview, grad school applications, or other decisions.
- Apply in the fall for SSHRC and OGS scholarships if applying to grad school in Ontario.

Where could I go after graduation?

- Advertising
- Broadcasting
- Business administration and management
- Campaign management
- Communications
- Consumer services
- Diplomatic service
- Editing
- Education
- Environmental management
- Events management
- Foreign affairs
- Fundraising
- Government
- Human resources
- Intelligence analysis
- International development
- International trade
- Journalism
- Law
- Marketing and communications
- Media – electronic and print
- Media analysis
- Public affairs
- Public health
- Public policy, administration and service
- Public relations
- Research
- Social work
- Speech writing
- Urban and regional planning

Some careers may require additional training.
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 Major Map tool.

A balanced approach leads to long-term success. While you will learn a lot from your studies, taking time to get relevant experience outside of the classroom, build your network, and gain international experience, will position you to be more competitive in your job search or grad school applications.

Get started thinking about the future now – where do you want to go after your degree? Having tentative goals (like careers or grad school) while working through your degree can help with short-term decisions about courses and experiences, but also help you keep motivated for success.

Get the help you need

Queen’s provides you with a broad range of support services from your first point of contact with the university through to graduation. At Queen’s, you are never alone. We have many offices dedicated to helping you learn, think and do.

Ranging from help with academics and careers, to physical, emotional, or spiritual resources – our welcoming living and learning environment offers the programs and services you need to be successful, both academically and personally, and Queen’s wants you to succeed! Check out the Student Affairs website for available resources.

What employers want

The Canadian Council of Chief Executives list the top 6 skills sought by employers as:
1. People skills
2. Communication skills
3. Problem-solving skills
4. Analytical abilities
5. Leadership skills
6. Industry-specific knowledge

Take the time to think about the unique skills you have developed at Queen’s, starting with the skills list here for ideas. Explaining your strengths with compelling examples will be important for applications to employers and further education. For help, check out the Career Services skills workshop.

What can I learn studying POLITICAL STUDIES?

- Knowledge to identify patterns in current affairs based on understanding of different political systems and cultures
- Oral and written communication to write clear, succinct briefing notes and reports, and give engaging, effective presentations
- Research knowledge of various domains in politics to find reliable sources of information and to organize the investigation of a problem
- Problem solving to apply different theoretical perspectives (qualitative and quantitative) to reveal multiple dimensions of an issue
- Resource and time management to manage multiple long-term projects
- Logical reasoning to analyze concepts and assess arguments used in debates about law and policy