

# Nursing PhD Map

## Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies

### Why GRADUATE STUDIES in NURSING?

Consider a graduate degree in Nursing for all it has to offer: well-developed skills in critical thinking, writing, research and, perhaps more importantly, skills to facilitate change in today's health care system. Graduate students and their work are an important part of an ongoing knowledge creation process that provides the health care system with the necessary tools to understand phenomena using various ways of knowing. Today's job market seeks people with advanced practice skills who can critically analyze information and evidence, synthesize scholarly and public reports, create new knowledge, and lead change and transformation. Study Nursing and you will acquire such skills.

### Why QUEEN'S?

The School of Nursing at Queen's offers an online PhD program. Students attend three on-campus residencies in Year 1 (September, January, and May), and complete their coursework online. This innovative program prepares graduates with analytical and research skills required to expand knowledge of clinical, theoretical, and health systems issues. Our students are taught primarily in small graduate seminars, in which they engage in a lively, critical examination of philosophy and research, and delve into their own research. Nurtured by close mentoring relationships with faculty supervisors, students engage early and continuously in research and successfully complete the program in 4 years. Situated in an academic environment that embodies scholarship, graduates are



well-prepared for careers as leaders in research and scholarship, clinical practice, and health care administration.

### Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years, full-time): coursework, comprehensive exam, thesis proposal, research, and final thesis examination.

### RESEARCH Areas

#### Practice environments

- Communication strategies and systems
- Leadership
- Models of care
- Workplace culture, structure and health

#### Populations with complex conditions

- Mental health and/or addictions
- Multimorbidity
- Optimizing function and well-being
- Outcomes monitoring

#### Health care quality

- Advancing safety
- Educational and technological innovations
- Health system service and delivery
- Risk assessment and reduction

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

GRAD MAP FOR PhD STUDENTS 

*"I loved the collegial atmosphere provided by the caring and supportive faculty. It was at Queen's that I developed my thirst for knowledge through evidence based research."*

*– Judeline Innocent, RN, PhD*

Visit the [School of Nursing website](#) to read faculty profiles and learn more about their research. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests, contact them to introduce yourself and discuss your interest in pursuing graduate studies and relevant experience.



**GRADUATE STUDIES AND  
POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS**

[queensu.ca/grad-postdoc](https://queensu.ca/grad-postdoc)

# Nursing PhD Map

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)



YEAR I

YEAR II

YEAR III

YEAR IV  
& TRANSITIONING

ACHIEVE YOUR  
ACADEMIC  
GOALS

- Attend three 7-10-day on-campus residencies (September, January, and May).
- Complete 5 courses (4 online; 1 on-campus during May residency).
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.

MAXIMIZE  
RESEARCH  
IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete Course on Research Ethics (CORE).
- Apply to Tri-Council, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend the annual Graduate Student Research Day, the JBI Comprehensive Systematic Review Training Workshop, and participate in biweekly Academic Series.

BUILD  
SKILLS AND  
EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Associate Director (Graduate Nursing Programs) 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.

ENGAGE  
WITH YOUR  
COMMUNITY

- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.

LAUNCH YOUR  
CAREER

- Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning 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.
- Find impactful work that aligns with your values using the Queen's Career Guide to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

- Write your comprehensive exams.
- Form your thesis committee, embark on your substantive research, and write and defend your thesis proposal.
- Consider enrolling in additional electives that may benefit your research and career goals.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities. Attend PhD Seminar every other week.

- Attend and present at the Annual Scientific Meeting of Health Sciences Research Trainees, the Annual Graduate Student Research day, in biweekly Academic Series, through professional associations, or at topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media like LinkedIn, a blog or podcast.
- Apply to National Training Research Programs, such as the Canadian Frailty Network, or TUTOR-PHC.

- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in the community.
- Create an eportfolio of your skills, experiences, and competencies.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enrol in SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development.

- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- If pursuing research abroad or outside Kingston, investigate options such as Fulbright Scholarships.

- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by using 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.

- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA) writing camps, such as Dissertation on the Lake.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings.
- Start thinking of potential thesis examiners.

- Continue to present at conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) or GRADflix competition.
- Contact the Queen's Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work. Check out the Nursing and Health Research webpage.
- Attend and present at the Annual Graduate Student Research Day.

- Begin teaching as a departmental Teaching Fellow.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, SGSPA professional development, MITACS, or other sources to boost your skills.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate hosted by QUIC and Four Directions.

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through LinkedIn, the Queen's Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

- 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. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your industry resume and begin your job search plan.

- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research at conferences or to other graduate students and faculty members, and work with your supervisor to prepare for your examination.
- Review submission and examination guidelines.
- Secure all necessary oral examination accommodations.
- Discuss career pathways, reference letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

- Keep attending conferences and connecting with scholars in your field, and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen's Media Centre.
- Attend and present at the Annual Student Nursing Research Day.
- Consider being interviewed on the SGSPA radio show Grad Chat to talk about your research.

- 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.

- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Nurses' Association.
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Nursing.

- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, and interviews.
- 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.

Knowledge & Workplace  
Skills

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

- **Knowledge and technical skills**
- Ability to **convey complex information** to a diverse audience
- **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**
- Capacity to work both **independently** and as part of a **team**
- **Aware of sound ethical practices** and understanding of research and **cultural sensitivity**
- **Professionalism** in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- **Leadership:** initiative and vision leading people and discussion

Career Possibilities

A PhD in Nursing 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. Graduates from the Nursing PhD program have found careers as:

- Advanced Practice Nurses
- Deans or Directors
- Healthcare Administrators
- Professors
- Research Scientists

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. To make your own custom map, use the My Grad Map tool: [careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps](https://careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps).

# Graduate Studies FAQs

## How do I use this map?

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 suggestions to help you explore possibilities. For more support with your professional development, take advantage of the SGSPA professional development framework and the new Professional Development Plan (PDP) process to set personalized 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

- Master's degree in Nursing or equivalent. Applicants without an undergraduate university degree in nursing will be considered on an individual basis, and are strongly encouraged to contact the School of Nursing to discuss this opportunity prior to applying.
- **Grade requirements:** Minimum overall average equivalent to B+.

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Two academic letters of reference (e.g. course professors).
- Registration (or eligibility to register) as a Registered Nurse with the College of Nurses of Ontario.
- Statement of academic, research and professional plans.
- Copy of Curriculum Vitae (Resume)
- Questions for Doctoral Nursing Program
- 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).
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to connect with potential supervisors prior to applying. Prospective applicants are also encouraged to identify potential supervisor(s) in your application, state why you are interested in working with this supervisor and how working with this supervisor would be a good fit for yourself and your research, and briefly outline how you could contribute to this supervisor's current research program.

### KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- **Application deadline:** February 1st
- **Notification of acceptance:** mid-March to early April.

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

## What about FUNDING?

In keeping with the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs policy, eligible full-time Ph.D. students qualify for research assistantships (RA), teaching assistantships (TA), teaching fellowships (TF), Queen's Graduate Awards (QGA), and internal awards.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from CIHR, OGS, SSHRC, and other sources. For more information on many external awards, see the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' information on awards and scholarships or see what awards are offered through the School of Nursing.



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