

# Political Studies MA Map

## Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies

### 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 a well-rounded education that gives our graduates a solid basis for a wide range of careers. The department has various strengths, including ethnically divided and diverse political systems, gender and politics, political institutions such as federalism and political parties, international relations, and political behaviour.

*"I have really appreciated my time as an MA student in the Political Science department at Queen's. Small in size, the department fosters a sense of community and mutual support. Yet, the department remains highly competitive, boasting professors and students at the tops of their fields."*

— Maria Krause, MA, PhD



GRAD MAP FOR MA STUDENTS →

### Why QUEEN'S?

As one of Canada's premier departments of political science, we are committed to both research and teaching. Our faculty are actively engaged in a wide range of research activities, and are highly visible in the discipline both in Canada and abroad. We are no less committed to our students.

### Program STRUCTURE

We offer three options for the Master's of Political Studies:

- **MA in Political Studies:** Students will complete 6 term-length courses and complete a Major Research Paper.
- **MA in Political and Legal Thought:** Students in this collaborative program will complete 4 term-length courses in the field of Political Thought (out of a total of 6 required courses) as well as complete a Major Research Paper in an area relevant to the specialization.
- **MA in Political Studies with concentration in Nationalism, Ethnicity, Peace, and Conflict:** Students in this concentration will complete 3 term-length courses in the area of this concentration (out of a total of 6 courses) as well as a Major Research Paper in an area relevant to this concentration.

### FIELDS of Study

- Canadian Politics
- Comparative Politics
- Gender and Politics
- International Relations
- Political Theory

Visit the [Political Studies Department website](#) to read about fields of study and learn more about supervisor interest areas. Although not a prerequisite, you may reach out to potential supervisors to discuss areas of mutual interest.



**GRADUATE STUDIES AND POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS**

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

# Political Studies MA Map

MASTER OF ARTS (MA)



GETTING STARTED

INTERMEDIATE STAGE

WRAPPING UP

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Start with key priorities like developing your relationship with your supervisor, and doing your coursework.
- Consider how your coursework can contribute to your Major Research Paper.
- Find your way through the academic process with help from departmental and School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA) professional development workshops, the department Grad Chair, and SGSPA website.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Start to think about the audiences for your research.
- If you will be continuing graduate studies, apply for Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Ontario Graduate Scholarship funding.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Consider positions in student services, the Society of Graduate & Professional Students (SGPS), or media outlets like the Queen's Journal, CFRC, and the SGSPA Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory for more ideas.
- Serve on departmental or university committees. Talk to the Political Studies Graduate Student Association to get involved.

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, museums, and cultural studies groups, such as the Centre for Studies on Democracy and Diversity, the Centre for International and Defence Policy, and the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding a career that fits starts with knowing yourself. Get help by taking a Career Services workshop or meeting with a career educator and coach. Check out 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.
- Check admission deadlines if taking further studies.

- Complete your coursework.
- Begin to research and write your Major Research Paper.
- Finalize your Major Research Paper topic in consultation with your supervisor.

- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Political Studies Graduate Student Association (PSGSA) Conference.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) or GRADflix competition.
- Expand your research audience through social media like LinkedIn, a blog or podcast.

- 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 (CTL). Enrol in SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate hosted by QUIC and Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre.
- International students interested in staying in Canada can speak with an International Student Advisor.

- Explore different careers of interest by using LinkedIn to connect with Queen's alumni. For more information, check out Career Cruising.
- If you are considering a PhD, explore programs of interest, reach out to faculty, and apply to PhD programs and external scholarships.
- Find impactful work that aligns with your values using the Queen's Career Guide to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

- Complete your Major Research Paper.

- Consider publication options for your research.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) Annual Conference or Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN).
- Consider being interviewed on the SGSPA radio show Grad Chat to talk about your research.
- Consider writing an article in The Conversation.

- 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.
- Investigate internships from MITACS and other sources.
- Check out opportunities for extra training through CTL, SGSPA professional development, or other sources to boost your skills.

- 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.
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Political Science Association.

- Volunteer for 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.

Knowledge & Workplace Skills

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

- **Research skills:** analyze and assess arguments based on their empirical and normative components
- **Analytical writing skills:** write in a clear, succinct, explanatory, and persuasive manner
- **Effective verbal communication skills**
- **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**
- **Independence** and experience as a collaborative worker
- **Awareness:** an understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research, and cultural sensitivity
- **Professionalism** in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- **Leadership:** initiative and vision leading people and discussion

Career Possibilities

A Master's degree in Political Studies can take your career in many directions. Many of our MA graduates choose to continue their academic inquiry with a PhD. Our Master's graduates are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:

- Academia and teaching
- International and non-profit organizations
- Law
- Policy analytics
- Politics
- PR and communications

Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can provide you with 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 make the most of my time at Queen's?

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 just 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 customized 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. With over 130 graduate programs across more than 50 departments and research centers, you will find friends, peers, and support among our graduate students. With the world's best scholars, prize-winning professional development opportunities, competitive funding packages and life in the 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

- 4 year undergraduate degree in Political Science (or equivalent).
- **Grade requirements:** minimum B+ average.

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- 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).

### KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- **Application due:** January 22nd, 2026
- **Notification of acceptance:** March

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

## What about FUNDING?

Each offer of admission guarantees a minimum level of funding for the duration of the student's period of funding-eligibility (one year for MA students). This funding typically consists of graduate awards and teaching assistantships. We encourage applicants to apply for additional funding through external scholarships.

For more information, please visit the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' information on awards and scholarships, and [queensu.ca/politics/graduate/ma-programs](https://queensu.ca/politics/graduate/ma-programs)

