

Political Studies PhD Map

Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies

Why Graduate Studies in Political Science?

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.

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

PhD (4 years, full-time): Students will complete coursework, field exams in two fields, a thesis proposal, a second-language examination, thesis, and thesis defence.

Fields of Study

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



"Upon setting foot in the Department, I found an open and supportive community of graduate students, as well as a genuinely helpful and caring faculty. The almost daily contact with fellow graduate students and faculty forced me to stay focused on research and helped me to complete the dissertation in a timely manner." — Rémi Léger, PhD

Before applying, you should identify your area of research interest and think about potential supervisors. Visit the [Political Studies Department website](#) to read about fields of study and learn more about supervisor interest areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact them and tell them about your interest in graduate work and related experience.

This is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise. Meet with your potential supervisor at departmental events for prospective students.



Political Studies PhD Map

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

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.



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 PhD in Political Studies 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.

- 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.

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?

Queen's offers graduate students from every discipline a close-knit intellectual community where they can learn, discover, and build lasting connections. With more than 130 graduate programs across 50+ departments and research centres, students benefit from world-class scholars, prize-winning professional development, generous funding packages, and life in the historic waterfront city of Kingston. The campus sits at the heart of Kingston, just a 10-minute walk from downtown's shops, restaurants, and waterfront, and is deeply integrated with the local community. For more on 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

- M.A. in Political Science, Political Studies, or an equivalent.
- **Grade requirements:** minimum A- average.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- If English is not a first language, nor was the language of instruction in undergraduate studies, prospective students must meet English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening as part of the application process, and before final acceptance is granted, as per School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' regulations.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

- **Application due:** January 22, 2027
- **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 (Four year for PhD students). This funding typically consists of graduate awards and teaching assistantships.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC, and other sources. For more information on awards and scholarships, consult the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs' website.

