Why GRADUATE STUDIES in PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES?

Graduate students and their work are an important part of ongoing research that helps us understand natural, cultural, imaginative, social, technological and health phenomena. In the PhD program in Public Health Sciences, students gain skills to communicate scientifically, describe trends and patterns of health and illness, critically review scientific literature, collect and analyze data, and more.

The goal of the Public Health Sciences PhD program is to graduate individuals who are capable of functioning as independent investigators within academic (or equivalent) research positions, or who can occupy positions of professional leadership in public health- or health-related agencies where research is an important function.

The PhD program offers a general track or has specializations in Epidemiology or Biostatistics. Students in the general track study diverse public health topics including those related to health economics, health policy, global and population health, among others. These students collect and use a variety of types of data and research approaches depending on their own interests and the expertise of their Supervisor(s).

Students in the Epidemiology specialization will study advanced epidemiologic methods and biostatistics and conduct a thesis using those methods. Research topics and methods covered by this specialization include statistical methodological research in the context of public health, biomedical, or clinical studies.

Why QUEEN’S?

At Queen’s, we have world class researchers and instructors who provide exceptional learning and mentorship for doctoral students on an historic campus in the heart of Kingston. The relatively small size of our program allows students to get to know faculty members and each other very well. PhD students take on leadership roles in the Department frequently acting as Teaching Assistants for graduate level courses and getting involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Kingston is a wonderful city to live, learn and play on the shores of Lake Ontario. There are many affordable housing options for graduate students and upper year students who are always willing to share their knowledge and expertise!

GRAD MAP FOR PhD STUDENTS

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years) with an option to remain in a general track or specialize in Epidemiology or Biostatistics. Each student completes at least 4 courses, comprehensive exam, and dissertation.

Research AREAS

There are many research areas including:

- Cancer Epidemiology
- Population Health
- Health Services & Policy Research
- Clinical Epidemiology
- Health Equity
- Global Health
- Health Economics
- Physical Activity Epidemiology
- Biostatistics
- Mental Health
- And more!

Visit PhD Public Health Sciences to learn about faculty members who are accepting students and their research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work and related experience.
YEAR I
- Key priorities include completing required health and safety, animal, human research ethics training, any required coursework, and your comprehensive exam.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.

YEAR II
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Priorities include completing your research outline and proposal, and pursuing research.
- Check out Society of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development workshops and SGSPR website for guidance through the academic process.

YEAR III
- Continue to research and write your dissertation. Check out the SGSPR Dissertation Boot Camp.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Society of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development publishing workshop.
- Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.

YEAR IV
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or at conferences and work with your 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.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?
A graduate degree in Public Health Sciences can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:
- Knowledge and technical skills
- Effective communication skills in multiple forms for diverse audiences
- 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, respect for cultural and research integrity
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?
A PhD in Public Health Sciences can take your career in many directions. In Canada, about 40% of all PhDs will work in post-secondary education, the rest will work in industry, government, or non-profits.
- Health Care (Hospital clinical labs)
- Academic labs
- Research labs
- Scientific supply companies
- Administration in academic, health care or government settings
- Technical positions in academic institutions or the private sector
- Teaching positions in academic institutions or the private sector
- Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
• Master’s degree in health sciences, epidemiology, biostatistics, statistics, health promotion, health geography, economics or a related discipline.
• Demonstrated research competency, usually through a research-based thesis or a research project with peer-reviewed publication.
• Grade requirements: First-class academic standing (equivalent GPA of 3.7 or 80%).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
• Statement of Interest (including area of research and potential supervisor).
• Transcripts and CV.
• Applicants with non-thesis based Master's training may include published, in-press or under review research papers as documentation of academic research experience.
• If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30); Speaking (22/30); Reading (22/30); Listening (20/30), for a total of 88/120 (applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE Academics: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
• Application due: January 31. Late applications will be considered until all positions are filled.
• Application review begins in mid-February.

Before you start your application, please review the PHS website and reach out to potential supervisors. Please also be familiar with the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

The department guarantees a minimum funding package of $18,000 per year for every PhD student. There are also opportunities to compete for internal/external awards and take on paid research or teaching assistantships. For more information on internal and external awards please see the School of Graduate Studies' information on awards and scholarships.