Why GRADUATE STUDIES in CIVIL ENGINEERING?

As a PhD student in the field of Civil Engineering, you can play a vital role in future developments in such areas as design of foundations, water quality, sediment transportation, pipeline flow, construction and rehabilitation of structures, and many other areas. Civil Engineering has a wide range of applications that contribute to modern life and its infrastructure.

Graduate students and their work are an important part of an ongoing research process that provides the community with ways of understanding natural, cultural, imaginative, social and technological phenomena. Check out whygradstudies.ca for more reasons to choose graduate studies in engineering.

Why QUEEN’S?

As a PhD student in Civil Engineering at Queen’s you are part of one of the most research intensive universities in Canada. Our research program is internationally renowned with a wide range of research activities in all of the major specialization areas of Civil Engineering.

The Queen’s graduate programs in Civil Engineering are home to some of the finest minds in the fields of civil and environmental engineering. Students have the chance to study engineering in an environment where multidisciplinary research and activities are encouraged and facilitated.

The Civil Engineering Department’s objective is to provide a broadly-based education in civil engineering which is intrinsically supported by world-class research in the areas of Structural, Geotechnical, Hydrotechnical, and Environmental Engineering.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): 4 graduate term length courses, research, comprehensive oral examination and a thesis.

RESEARCH Areas

- Geotechnical Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Hydrotechnical Engineering
- Structural Engineering

Visit the Civil Engineering website to read about research areas and learn more about faculty members’ research specialization. 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.

We suggest that you review the specific research projects currently being investigated by faculty members to identify a potential supervisor. Please note, however, that contacting a faculty member does not guarantee acceptance and you will need to submit your full application in order to be considered.
ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

• Key priorities include forming your committee, coursework, discussing direction of your thesis research, and beginning your research.
• Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
• Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of support.
• Complete safety training.
• Consider participating in the 1 Minute Thesis (1MT) competition.
• Complete safety training.
• Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations for timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
• Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
• Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings.
• Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

• Think about audiences for your research.
• Complete the CORE online module on research ethics if doing research regarding sensitive topics.
• Apply to NSERC, SGs, and other funding sources.
• Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons publishing workshop.
• Complete timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
• Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
• Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings.
• Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

• Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees.
• Consider positions in student services, the SGs, or media outlets like the Queen's Journal, CRTC, or the SGs Blog. Look in the AMS Club Directory.
• Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.
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ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

• Consider volunteering with different community organizations.
• Connect to broader communities of engineers by joining one of the Engineering Society's Design Teams.
• Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
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LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

• Finding a career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like What Are You Going to Do With That? for advice on various career options.
• Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
• Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Week to explore your career pathways.
• 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.
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WHAT WILL I LEARN?
A graduate degree in Civil Engineering can equip you with:
• 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
• Understanding and awareness of ethical aspects of professional practice
• Leadership: positive and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?
A PhD in Civil Engineering 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. Our PhD students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:
• Academia and Research
• Consulting
• Public sector
• Manufacturing
• Policy and Governance
• Civil Engineering in the public domain
• Law

Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- Master's degree in Civil Engineering. Applicants with a Master's degree in a cognate science may be admitted.

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 deadline: March 1 to qualify for internal funding.
- Notification of acceptance: 2-3 months after the full application has been received.

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

What about FUNDING?

The level of financial support consequently varies among graduate students in the Department, with a guaranteed minimum level of $18,000. As part of the minimum funding package, you may serve as a Teaching or Research Assistant.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a one time $10,000 award to Doctoral students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies' information on awards and scholarships or see what awards are offered through the Civil Engineering Department.

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 SGS 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.