GRAD MAP FOR PH.D. STUDENTS

Political Studies PhD 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 is particularly well known for its strength in the study of ethnically divided and diverse societies.

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.

“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

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

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

2021-2022

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

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

- Research skills: analyze and assess arguments about policy and institutions, 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: perserverance.
- 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 interaction.
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion.

WHERE CAN I GO?

A PhD in Political Studies can take your professional 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
- Policy analysis
- Law
- International and non-profit organizations
- Politics
- Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can provide you with a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

YEAR I
- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, coursework, field exams, and language exams.
- Meet regularly with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services. Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Political Studies Graduate Student Association (PSGSA).

YEAR II
- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing substantive research.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of the Expanding Horizons website.
- 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).

YEAR III
- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the SSIG writing camps like Dissertation Boot Camp and Dissertation on the Lake.
- Learn from the Expanding Horizons publishing workshops.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research at conferences and work with 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.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

YEAR I
- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete CORE online module on research ethics if doing research regarding sensitive topics.
- Attend conferences in your field.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings.
- Learn from the many academic and professional development workshops available throughout the year.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.

YEAR II
- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in the community.
- Start keeping an ePortfolio of your skills, experiences, and competencies.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Enroll in SGSS92 for the Professional Development in teaching and learning.

YEAR III
- Continue to present at conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work.
- List yourself on the Arts and Science University Research website.

YEAR IV
- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

YEAR I
- Serve on departmental or university committees.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGSS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFCR, and the SGSS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

YEAR II
- 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 (CIDD), and the Institute of Intergropolitical Relations.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Consider signing up for the PhD-Community Initiative program run by the SGS.

YEAR III
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queen’s Connects on 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.
- Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

YEAR I
- Finding a career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services workshop or meet with a career counselor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? for the Academic Job Search from 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.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like SGS Career Week to explore your career pathways.

YEAR II
- Building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by using Queen’s Connects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen alumni. For more information check out Career Counseling.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

YEAR III
- Volunteer for 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.

YEAR IV
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doctoral fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, or interviews.
- If considering employment abroad, research possible immigration regulations. If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

YEAR I
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by using Queen’s Connects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen alumni. For more information check out Career Counseling.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

YEAR II
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in difficult forums: casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

YEAR III
- Contact the International Student Advisor to help with your immigration status.
- Consider applying for international fellowships and positions.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

YEAR IV
- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!
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 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: Late January (see Political Studies website).
• 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 years for PhD students). This funding typically consists of graduate awards and teaching assistantships. We encourage applicants to apply for additional funding through external scholarships, e.g. SSHRC. Incoming graduate students who win SSHRC awards are automatically provided a one time top-up award by Queen’s.

For more information, please visit: queensu.ca/politics/graduate/phd-program.

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. With over 130 graduate programs throughout more than 50 departments and research centres, you will find friends, peers and support among our graduate students. 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.

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