Why GRADUATE STUDIES in GEOGRAPHY?

Explore critical questions about our environment and our society as you develop research skills. Study with award-winning faculty in an interdisciplinary department that combines fundamental analysis and research with practical, applied approaches to planning and implementation.

“Geography gave me the support I needed. I was able to take a complex project and really run with it.”
— Dr. Sarah de Leeuw, PhD

Why QUEEN’S?

The Department of Geography and Planning at Queen’s University offers a comprehensive graduate program based on innovative research and strong collaboration between faculty and graduate students. Our specialized Earth System Science labs include GIS and remote-sensing labs equipped with a wide range of the latest software and hardware, and facilities with the latest field equipment and laboratory instrumentation. In human geography, we provide strong support for fieldwork that engages topics of public interest from the community to the national and international scale. Many of our students work on questions of global significance, including development projects in Latin America or Africa, ecological change in the Arctic or the relationship between international migration and human rights. We provide a place for graduate students to learn and excel within a vibrant and supportive intellectual community.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): 3 courses (including GPHY 801), qualifying exam, dissertation and oral defence.

RESEARCH Areas

- Work, Identity, and Place (Labour Geographies)
- Globalization, Development, Economies, and Sustainability
- Bodies, Health, and Healthcare
- Citizenship, Identity, Justice, and Governance
- Post-Colonialism, Indigenous Peoples, and Place
- Earth Systems Science, with a strong focus on Arctic systems, forests, and resources
- Geographic Information Science
- Urban and Regional Planning

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.

Visit the Department of Geography and Planning website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members’ 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, areas of research interest, and related experience. This is also an opportunity for you to find out if the faculty member is accepting new graduate students to supervise. Consider meeting with your potential supervisor at departmental events for prospective students.
**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**

- **YEAR I**
  - Key priorities include forming your committee, coursework, developing your research proposal, and preparing for your qualifying 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.
  - Look to Student Academic Success Services for supports. Attend and participate in graduate seminars in our Geography Colloquium and in other departments such as SSHRC, Policy Studies, and Environmental Studies.

- **YEAR II**
  - Write and defend your thesis proposal.
  - Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons.
  - Attend or present at a graduate conference such as the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAG) Annual Meeting or the American Association of Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting.

- **YEAR III**
  - Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
  - Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
  - Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

- **YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING**
  - Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
  - Present your research to graduate students and faculty or 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**

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with living people or sensitive topics.
- Apply to SSHRC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.
- Present your work at academic conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media.
- Start a research blog or build a website.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Join the departmental Graduate Student Council and seek ways to get involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFCR, and the SGS Blog.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.
- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in the community.
- Start keeping an epistle of your skills, experiences, and competencies.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGS901 or the PTTL 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.
- If pursuing research abroad, investigate options for support such as the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAG).
- Join groups on LinkedIn for specific careers or topics of interest.
- Get involved in student or young researchers organizations (e.g. through the Canadian Geophysical Union (CGU), CAG, and the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS)).

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**

- Consider volunteering with different community organizations such as Sustainable Kingston, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, or with Kingston Community Health Centres.
- Take advantage of the numerous facilities and laboratories and learn what research is occurring in the various departmental research groups.
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Association of Geographers.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queen’sConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Join CAG and AAG specialty group committees.
- Increase community engagement through the PhD Community Initiative.
- Expand your research network by connecting with researchers through social media, at conferences, or through LinkedIn.
- Organize panels at AAG and CAG.
- Organize special issues in key geographic journals, such as Canadian Geographer, and Hydrological Processes.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**

- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counselor for help. Check out books like *So What Are You Going to Do With That?* or *The Academic Job Search*.
- 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 Forum to explore your career pathways.
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by reading alumni profiles on the SGS website, and using Queen’sConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni, or find alumni in various careers through *Ask an Alum*.
- For more information check out Career Counselling.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.
- Participate in hiring committees if possible and attend job talks. Research academic careers of interest.
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- 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.
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures.
- Consider participating in the RUTHERFORD Graduate Research Colloquium and in other departments such as SSHRC, Policy Studies, and Environmental Studies.
- Write and defend your thesis proposal.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons.
- Attend or present at a graduate conference such as the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAG) Annual Meeting or the American Association of Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting.

**WHAT WILL I LEARN?**

A graduate degree in Geography can take you in new directions with valuable and versatile skills, such as:

- Research and technical skills
- Effective communication skills
- Research and academic 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, responsible research and cultural sensitivity.
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions.
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading peers and discussion.

**WHERE CAN I GO?**

A PhD in Geography 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.
- Consulting.
- International development.
- Government.
- Policy.
- Non-profit.
- Government.
- Research.
- Legal.
- Policy.
- Professional.
- Social service.
- Business.
- Media.
- Research.
- Policy.
- Non-profit.
- Government.
- Research.
- Media.
- Business.
- Legal.
- Policy.
- Professional.
- Social service.
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- International development.
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- Professional.
- Consulting.
- International development.
- Government.
- Non-profit.
- Social service.
- Business.
- Legal.

This map is intended to provide suggestions for activities and careers, but everyone’s abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
• Master’s degree. Transcripts from all previous programs/degrees are considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
• Statement of research interest.
• C.V. highlighting scholarly outputs and work experiences.
• If English is not your native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening. You will need (1) a total TOEFL (paper-based) score of at least 600, or (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 (Domestic & International students), which must include all supporting documents. However, late applications may be considered on a rolling basis until all spots are filled.
• Notification of acceptance: March.

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

What about FUNDING?

Doctoral students in the Geography program are guaranteed minimum funding of $18,000 per year for four years. Minimum funding levels are, however, generally higher than the guaranteed minimum. International students will be provided with an additional $5,000 per year to help offset higher tuition costs. The funding package may be comprised of graduate awards and teaching assistantships. Additional funding is highly likely.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR, and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.