Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- M.A. in Political Science, Political Studies, or an equivalent.
- Graduate 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 School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, 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: 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

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, 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 supervisors' 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.

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.

How do I use this map?

Whether you are considering or have embarked on graduate studies at Queen's, use this map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. The map helps you explore possibilities, set goals and track your individual accomplishments. Everyone's journey is different – the guide offers options for finding your way at Queen's and setting the foundation for your future. To make your own customized map, use the online My Grad Map tool.

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 HABITAT for available resources.

For more information, please visit: queensu.ca/politics/graduate/phd-program
**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**

- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, coursework, field exams, and language 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. Attend or present at a graduate conference such as Political Studies Graduate Student Association (PSGSA).

**YEAR I**

- Focus on your PhD MAP (My Grad Map tool).
- 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 (CRDP), and the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.
- Adapt to the academic environment and further develop your skills and experience.
- Attend the Career Services career planning workshop.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills.
- Practice articulating the skills you have developed in difficult forums: causal conversations, networking, and interviews.
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- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Political Science Association.
- 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.

**YEAR II**

- Focus on your PhD MAP (My Grad Map tool).
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Conduct your research in the field of Political Studies.
- Present your work at conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Seek out opportunities to engage with the academic labour market websites.
- 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 (CRDP), and the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.
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**YEAR III**

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- Conduct your research in the field of Political Studies.
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**YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING**

- Focus on your PhD MAP (My Grad Map tool).
- Conduct your research in the field of Political Studies.
- Present your work at conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Seek out opportunities to engage with the academic labour market websites.
- 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 (CRDP), and the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations.
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**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 oral and written 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:** Experience as a collaborative leader.
- **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.
- **WHERE CAN I GO?**

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:** Policy analytics.
- **Law:** International and non-profit organizations.
- **Politics:** Take time to explore career options, build experience, and network. Both projects and non-profits can provide you with a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.