Why GRADUATE STUDIES in SOCIOLOGY?

The Department focuses on critical social inquiry and in-depth research, offering students challenging projects and world-class resources to complete them. Our faculty members are all well-published scholars with national or international reputations, yet they still manage to maintain an open-door policy and establish supportive, mentoring relationships with students.

The Sociology graduate program at Queen's has particular strengths in socio-legal studies and criminology, critical sociology, and surveillance and digital media. Graduates of our PhD program have an outstanding record of securing full-time academic positions and successful professional careers such as in law, social work, policy analysis, and corrections. Many graduates of the PhD program remark on the intimate, supportive and cohesive culture of the Department with strong supervisory support.

Why QUEEN’S?

The Surveillance Studies Centre is a multi-disciplinary and international research centre affiliated with the Department. It offers several speakers series that have attracted leading figures in surveillance, including Edward Snowden. Its current streams include big data surveillance, drones, wearables, and social sorting.

“What I find unique about the Department of Sociology at Queen’s University is the diversity of graduate student research projects and the personalized support offered alongside. The Department here is just the right size; small enough to target individual student needs and large enough to dream big, and tackle those sociological questions you’ve been pondering since undergrad.”

– Mandi Veenstra, PhD Candidate

Program STRUCTURE

Two core half courses, two other half courses, a qualifying examination (written and oral), and a thesis and oral defense weighted at half of the total program.

RESEARCH Areas/Streams

- Criminology and Law
- Power, Inequalities and Social Justice
- Media, Information and Surveillance

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.
**Mental Health Commissions**
- Provincial Government
- Adjunct Faculty
- Project management: developing ideas, gathering student profiles on the SGS website, and using Queen'sConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen's Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

**Launch Your Career**
- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? or 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 Graduate Student Career Forum, to explore your career pathways.

**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.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGS901 or the PUTS certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.
- Attend the Department's Professional and Academic Development Program (PAPP). Offered every second year, and required.
- Consider becoming a book reviewer for a journal in your specific research specialism.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, Mitacs, or other sources to boost your skills. Investigate internships from Mitacs and other sources.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Quick and Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre’s Training Certificate.
- Consider teaching as a departmental Teaching Fellow. This is an excellent opportunity to start a teaching dossier.

**Year II**
- 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.
- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Attend a major conference in your field, such as the Canadian Sociological Association Congress, The American Criminology Society Annual Meeting, the Society for Social Studies of Science Annual Meeting, and more.

**Engage with Your Community**
- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as the Elizabeth Fry Society and the Boys and Girls Club.
- Follow the Sociology Department on Twitter.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- Get involved with the Annual Department of Sociology Graduate Conference, Interconnection.
- Consider organizing a conference panel for the CSA/Congress.
- 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.
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Association of Sociological Association, American Sociological Association, British Sociological Association, plus more specialized associations within your specific field of research.
- The Department of Sociology has a LinkedIn group to join.

**Achieve Your Academic Goals**
- Key priorities include forming your Supervisory and Qualifying Exam committees, and coursework (normally completed in the first year).
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodations.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.
- With your supervisor begin your list of Required Readings for your Qualifying Exam.
- Complete your Qualifying Exam. Defend your thesis proposal. Submit ethics review application (if necessary).
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons workshops.
- Attend or present at the annual department Graduate Student conference.
- Continue to research and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons: Publishing workshop.
- 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.

**What Will I Learn?**
- Advanced Knowledge and technical skills including:
  - Qualitative/Quantitative research techniques to analyze social issues
  - Critical thinking to evaluate social problems and interactions by challenging common assumptions.
  - Help of Expanded Horizons workshops.
  - Program Evaluation to collect, evaluate and analyze information concerning the effectiveness of a wide range of projects and policies.
  - Organizing critical debate and discussion to define, interpret and explain multifaceted current issues.
  - Policy Analysis to consider the impact and unintended consequences of policies, and consider the role of difference and effectiveness of political, social movements and social protest around policies.
  - User research to understand individual and group understandings, behaviors, needs, and motivations through observation techniques, task analysis, and other feedback methodologies.
- Essential transferable skills including:
  - Communication of complex information and arguments about social issues in appropriate formats.
  - Teamwork/Leadership: working creatively by cooperating with others in a manner which recognizes diverse views, values and cultural positions.
  - Information management: prioritizing, organizing and synthesizing large amounts of information.
  - Time management: manage competing demands.
  - Project management: developing ideas, gathering information, analyzing and appraising findings, and acting on conclusions.
  - Creativity and innovation to address complex challenges.
  - Persistence to work through challenges.
  - Understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and social sensitivity.
  - Independence and experience as a collaborative professional or leader.

**Where Can I Go?**
- The majority of our PhD graduates who sought a position in academia has been able to secure tenure track appointments. Others have pursued research careers in:
  - Adjunct Faculty
  - Provincial Government
  - Mental Health Commissions
  - Think Tanks
- PhD graduates in Sociology, from Queen's are securing rewarding, full-time tenure track positions where they are able to draw upon all of their education, skills, and abilities to contribute to international scholarship and higher education. Taking time to explore career options, build experiential, buy experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.
- Visit the Department of Sociology website to see where the degree can take you.
Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- BA Honours undergraduate degree and Master's degree in Sociology or equivalent with a minimum A- standing.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Writing Sample
- Statement of Interest

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Our application window opens annually in September. The application review process begins on January 1 and continues through the Spring. Applications must be submitted by January 1 to be considered for internal awards. We start to send out offers of acceptance in early February/March. Applications received after January 1 are accepted, and successful applicants may be offered funding, on a case-by-case basis, so please reach out for more information or begin your application.

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

What about FUNDING?

PhD students are guaranteed a minimum of $21,000 which includes a Teaching Assistantship and a Queen's Graduate Award. Funding is guaranteed for 4 years.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC 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.

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.

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.