Why GRADUATE STUDIES in NURSING?

Consider a graduate degree in Nursing for all it has to offer: well-developed skills in critical thinking, writing, and research and, perhaps even more importantly, skills to facilitate change in today’s health care system. Graduate students and their work are an important part of an ongoing research process that provides the health care system with ways of understanding phenomena using multiple ways of knowing. Today’s employment marketplace seeks people who can critically analyze information and evidence, synthesize in both scholarly and public reports, create new knowledge, and lead change and transformation. Study Nursing and you will acquire such skills.

Why QUEEN’S?

The School of Nursing at Queen’s now offers an online PhD program. Students attend two on-campus residencies in Year 1 (September and May), and complete their coursework online. This innovative program prepares graduates with analytical and research skills required to expand knowledge of clinical, theoretical, and health systems issues. Our students are taught primarily in small graduate seminars, in which they engage in a lively, critical examination of philosophy and research, and delve into their own research. Nurtured by close mentoring relationships with faculty supervisors, students engage early and continuously in research and successfully complete the program in 4 years. Situated in an academic environment that embodies scholarship, graduates are well-prepared for careers as leaders in research and scholarship, clinical practice and health care administration.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): course work, comprehensive exam, research thesis.

RESEARCH Areas

Practice environments
  • Models of care
  • Leadership
  • Workplace culture, structure and health
  • Communication strategies and systems

Populations with complex conditions
  • Optimizing function and well-being
  • Multimorbidity
  • Mental health and/or addictions
  • Outcomes monitoring

Health care quality
  • Advancing safety
  • Risk assessment and reduction
  • Educational and technological innovations
  • Health system service and delivery

and more

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

Visit the School of Nursing 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 and related experience.

“I loved the collegial atmosphere provided by the caring and supportive faculty. It was at Queen’s that I developed my thirst for knowledge through evidence based research.”

– Judeline Innocent, RN, PhD (2013)
2019-2020 Nursing PhD Map

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Attend two 10-day on-campus residencies (September and May).
- Complete 5 courses (4 online; 1 on-campus during May residency).
- 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 supports.
- Write your comprehensive exams.
- Form your thesis committee, embark on your substantive research, and write and defend your thesis proposal.
- Consider enrolling in additional electives that may benefit your research and career goals.
- Seek exponential/professional development opportunities. Attend PhD Seminar every other week.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete Courses on Research Ethics (CORE).
- Apply to Tri-Council, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend the Graduate Nursing Program Research Day, the IB Comprehensive Systematic Review Training Workshop, and participate in biweekly Academic Series.
- Attend and present at the Annual Scientific Meeting of Health Sciences Research Trainees, the Annual Graduate Nursing Program Research day, in biweekly Academic Series, through professional associations, or at topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Apply to National Training Programs, such as the Canadian Frailty Network, or TUTOR-PHC.
- 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. Check out the Nursing and Health Research webpage.
- Attend and present at the Annual Graduate Nursing Program Research Day.
- Attend and present in biweekly Academic Series.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Associate Director (Graduate Nursing Program) for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC, and the SGPS Blog. Look in the Arts Clubs Directory.
- 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 community.
- Start keeping an epistolary of your skills, experiences and competencies.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enroll in SGSD2 or the PUTH certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.
- Begin teaching as a departmental Teaching Fellow.
- 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 Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate hosted by QURC and FSDC.
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Consider joining professional associations like the Canadian Nurses Association.
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through QueenConnects 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 Nurses Association.
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Nursing.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.
- For pursuing research abroad or outside Kingston, investigate options such as Fulbright Scholarships.
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through QueenConnects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- 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. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, or interviews.
- If considering jobs 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

- 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? 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 School of Graduate Studies Career Week 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 QueenConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni, or find alumni in various careers through Ask an Alum. For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.
- 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.
- 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. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, or interviews.
- If considering jobs abroad, research possible immigration regulations. If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Nursing can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:
- 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
- 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 people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?

A PhD in Nursing 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. Graduates from the Nursing PhD program have found careers as:
- Professors
- Advanced Practice Nurses
- Healthcare Administrators
- Research Scientists
- Deans or Directors

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 Nursing or equivalent. Applicants without an undergraduate university degree in nursing will be considered on an individual basis, and are strongly encouraged to contact the School of Nursing to discuss this opportunity prior to applying.
- Grade requirements: minimum B+ average over core courses.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Two academic letters of reference.
- Registration (or eligibility to register) as a Registered Nurse with the College of Nurses of Ontario.
- Statement of academic, research and professional plans.
- Copy of Curriculum Vitae (Resume)
- Questions for Doctoral Nursing Program
- 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, (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 deadline: February 1st, or until all seats are filled.
- Notification of acceptance: mid-March to early April.

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

What about FUNDING?

In keeping with the School of Graduate Studies policy, eligible full-time Ph.D. students qualify for research assistantships (RA), teaching assistantships (TA), teaching fellowships (TF), Queen’s Graduate Awards (QGA) and internal awards.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from CIHR, OGS, SSHRC 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 on many external awards, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships or see what awards are offered through the School of Nursing.