

PhD Program in Social Work

School of Social Work

McMaster University

Application deadline: Open (until all positions filled)



Our PhD program focuses on **social work and social justice**. It aims to stimulate and support scholarship on the ways in which social policies and social work practices can contribute to redressing social inequalities and enhancing social justice. PhD students will develop a critical appreciation of current and emerging social work scholarship related to social justice, and deepen their understanding with relevant perspectives from other areas of study.

Highlights

- A combination of course work, seminars, and independent study
- Prepares candidates for research, teaching and positions of leadership in social work and social welfare
- Designed to be completed in four to six years
- Small seminars (4-6 students) and personalized research mentorship from a faculty supervisor
- **Guaranteed funding of \$17,500 (TAsip + \$8,000 graduate scholarship) in first 4 years of study**

Admission Requirements

To be eligible for admission to the PhD program, applicants are normally required to have:

- A completed MSW degree with an average of at least an A-. (Applicants with Master's degrees in other subjects must be able to demonstrate substantial knowledge of the social service/ social welfare field and have experience of working in justice and equity-seeking services or organizations);
- A completed graduate level course in social research methods;
- Demonstrated interest and experience in critical approaches to policies, practices and knowledge-building in social work.

Applicants will be evaluated on the basis of their qualifications and the alignment of their interests with the research interests and availability of faculty.

Program Requirements

1. **A minimum of six post-MSW courses**, including four mandatory courses (SW770 Social Work and Social Justice: Theoretical Tensions, SW 771 Research for Social Change, SW 772 Qualitative Methods for Social Work, and SW 773 Doctoral Research Seminar) and two elective courses.
2. **Comprehensive Examination**, which is designed to evaluate the breadth of students' knowledge of debates and developments in contemporary scholarship in social work and social justice.
3. **Thesis**. Students will be required to undertake original thesis research in areas of their substantive interest, engaging fully with its theoretical and methodological dimensions and demonstrating its contribution to academic and professional debate and action.

How to Apply

Students may apply online at:

<https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/programs/ph-d-in-social-work>

For more information (including possibilities to connect with our PhD students), please contact

Darlene Savoy, Administrative Assistant,
(905) 525-9140, x24596 or email:

dsavoy@mcmaster.ca

"[During my PhD years,] I received tremendous intellectual stimulation from course work and the strong scholarship of my thesis committee members. At the same time, I was given creative space to carve out my own theoretical path. Amidst a research-intensive culture, I formed a firm foundation on my research understanding and skills. I build so much on that foundation in my current teaching related to theory and research. In meetings or in classrooms, I often find myself having to be mindful of not to overly refer to my experience at McMaster. Moments like this reminds me of my gratefulness for the kind of education I received from the School of Social Work at McMaster."

*Winnie Seung-Wan Lo, PhD,
Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work,
University of Algoma*

"The [PhD] program is structured to give students a solid foundation in theories, methodologies, and scholarship in social work and social justice while at the same time enabling students to be involved in and explore their additional academic and community interests. Completing a PhD is a self-directed, independent, and intense course of study, but doing it in Social Work has created opportunities to connect my project back to larger School and community conversations about social change, equity, and our shared visions for a better world. I have very much appreciated the opportunity to take part in School and community events and to connect with faculty, community partners, alumni and staff; these opportunities have been very motivating and inspiring."

*Allyson Ion, PhD Candidate,
School of Social Work, McMaster University*