Queen’s University
Geography and Planning

Geography Graduate Program
INTRODUCTIONS

Neal Scott
Associate Head, Geography Graduate Program

Lauren Van Patter
First Year PhD student in Human Geography

Rachel Kuzmich
First Year MSc student in Physical Geography
Agenda

• Introduction
• Why Study Geography at Queen’s
  • Departmental merger
• Program Overview
  • MA, MSc (times, courses, etc.)
  • PhD (times, courses, qualifying exam, etc.)
• Funding
• Alumni
• Kingston
• Departmental Life – Lauren Van Patter and Rachel Kuzmich
Why Study Geography at Queen’s

- Largest Graduate Program in Arts and Sciences
  - 71 MPL, 10 MA, 12 MSc, 55 PhD
- World class faculty (Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada, Canada Research Chairs, Queen’s National Scholars, etc.)
- Stimulating research environment – everyone is approachable
- Strong employment record of our alumni
- Merger with School of Urban and Regional Planning
- Amazing support staff!!
Why Study Geography at Queen’s

• Potential field work in unique places

Sean Arruda (R) in High Arctic (N. Scott)

Alexandra Pedersen (R) in Guatemala (A. Pedersen)

Yao Feng and other students Working in China (Y. Feng)
Program Overview – MA and MSc

• Two years of funding eligible time
• Four courses, plus GPHY 857 (core course)
• Possible to take some courses in other departments with permission
• Most courses completed in Year 1
• Possible promotion to the PhD program after Year 1
• Year 2 dedicated to writing thesis
• SGS – many support systems for students (e.g. thesis boot camp)
Program Overview – PhD

• Four years of funding eligible time
• Two courses, plus GPHY 801 (core course)
• Possible to take some courses in other departments with permission
• Most courses completed in Year 1
• Qualifying exam – Year 2
• Years 2 onward - dedicated to research and writing
• SGS – many support systems (e.g. thesis boot camp)
• Funding comprised of TA, RA, QGA, ITA (international only), external awards, internal awards
• No need to apply for internal awards UNLESS we tell you!!
• Can apply for Queen’s Academic Excellence Awards
• **Minimum annual** funding GUARANTEED for Masters ($14,000) and PhD ($18,000) for two and four years, respectively.
• Funding can vary year to year, and depends on success obtaining external awards (never below minimum)
• Conference travel and field work grants available
• These awards often supplemented by faculty (e.g. summer salary)
Our Successful Alumni

- Employment rates of our graduates are very high
- Doctoral students
  - Statistics Canada
  - Various postdocs (e.g. Middle East Technical Univ.)
  - Wide range of academic positions (e.g. Carleton, Nipissing, and many others)
- Masters students – various employers
  - Ducks Unlimited (remote sensing)
  - Various consulting companies (both MA and MSc)
  - Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
  - Hydro One (environmental assessments)
  - Transit Planner
  - Many go on to do PhD’s from both streams
Life in Kingston

- Population about 124,000
- Campus is close to Lake Ontario
- Vibrant downtown, significant green areas
- Reasonable cost of living
- Proximity to Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Syracuse (NY)
- Great area for cycling, hiking, other outdoor activities (Thousand Islands, Adirondack Park)
- Walkable city, excellent public transit
- Quality of life is high according to various rankings

http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/prospective-students/why-queens/about-kingston
Student perspectives

Lauren Van Patter (first year PhD)
Rachel Kuzmich (first year MSc)
My Background/Research

**Background**
- BSc Environmental Science, University of Guelph
- MA Geography, University of Guelph
  - Feral cats in southern Ontario
- RA: Domestic dogs in Botswana


**Doctoral research**
- Animal Geographies: mixed-methods to explore lives in multispecies communities
- Human-wildlife conflict & coexistence
  - Coyotes & black bears in Ontario
- Aversion conditioning, rehabilitation, education
- SSHRC CGS Doctoral funding
The Queen’s Geography PhD Experience

Coursework (4 courses)
• GPHY 801 x 2: theory & methods; developing proposal
• 2 electives of interest
  – GPHY 836: Qualitative Methods
  – PHIL directed reading course

Funding
• Many applications due early in the fall term so be prepared to start working on applications
• Ask advisor/research team to read draft; ask colleagues to see successful examples

Departmental life
• 1st & 3rd floor lounges with fridges, microwaves, kettles, etc.
• Printer, cafeteria, seminar rooms
• Many interesting guest lectures & seminars
• Social committee: many activities
• Start a reading group with colleagues
Life in Kingston

**University services/amenities**
- Health services on/near campus
- Student Wellness Services – workshops
- Access to gym, pool, classes at ARC
- Bus pass, good transit system

**Things to do**
- Nice downtown; many restaurants, theatres, etc.; Wolf Island free ferry
- Right on Lake Ontario
- Many nearby natural areas to hike, bike, swim, canoe, fish, ski, etc.
  - CRCA: [https://crca.ca/conservation-lands/conservation-areas/](https://crca.ca/conservation-lands/conservation-areas/)
  - Thousand Islands, Bon Echo, & Frontenac Parks
My Experience as a Physical Geography MSc. Student

**Little bit about me**
- BSc. Geography & Biology from Trent University
- Started at Queen’s May 2017
- TA for 1st and 2nd year physical geography courses

**Research at Queen’s**
- Weekly meetings with my supervisor
- Thesis based MSc:
  - *Identifying Cerulean Warbler Habitat From Forest Structure Using Airborne Laser Scanning*
  - Fieldwork!!! 2 months of the summer

**Coursework (5 courses)**
- GPHY 857: to develop literature review and proposal
- Four courses related to my interests and thesis: remote sensing of earth and environmental systems, uav photogrammetry, computational data analysis (in the math and stats dept), landscape ecology (reading course)
My Experience as a Physical Geography MSc. Student

**Personal Development**
- Expanding Horizons workshop series
- Student committees, clubs, societies

**Outside of the lab**
- Hiking and cycling in local parks
- Agnes Etherington Art Centre
- Meetup groups (GoGeomatics, Kingston Developers, 500 Women Scientists)
- Local festivals & a downtown with everything

**Housing**
- Average for a university town in Ontario
- May 1\textsuperscript{st} and September 1\textsuperscript{st} start leases
- Queen’s Housing, Kijiji, Facebook

**Getting Around**
- Bus pass included in fees
- Very walkable & bike friendly
QUESTIONS?