

# INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: CONCENTRATION IN SUSTAINABILITY (MA/MS)

## Master of Arts/Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies, concentration in Sustainability

Unit: Graduate School (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/>) (GI)  
Program Website (<https://louisville.edu/upa/programs/master-of-interdisciplinary-studies-in-sustainability/>)  
Academic Plan Code(s): IS\_MA\_SUS, IS\_MS\_SUS

## Program Information

The large-scale goal of the Master of Interdisciplinary Studies in Sustainability Degree programs (both MA and MS degree programs are available) is to prepare students to address complex regional, state, national and global challenges posed by the intersection of human exponential growth and increasingly limited resources that support society. Students seeking a career involving research or doctoral program should consider pursuing the Master of Science option.

The exponentially rising demands that human populations make on natural resources and ecological systems that supply us with energy, food, water, and many other ecosystem services will be further threatened by climate change and the pollution of air, soil, and water. Continued reliance on a "business as usual" approach to the economic production and consumption of goods and services, often characterized by the stresses it places on The Commons and by a disregard for environmental and social justice, now threatens the ability of the natural world to absorb our collective impact, erodes our collective security, and polarizes our societies. Substantial changes in social contracts, economic systems, as well as individual and institutional behaviors will be needed to provide more sustainable, healthy and secure societies. National, regional and local experimentation is needed to find solutions to societal challenges.

This Master of Interdisciplinary Studies in Sustainability program is an initiative of the University of Louisville's Sustainability Council which seeks to integrate sustainability into everything that goes on at UofL. Students in the program are encouraged to contribute to the Sustainability Council's efforts to explore sustainable solutions for UofL and our community.

More information about the UofL Sustainability Council can be found on their website (<http://louisville.edu/sustainability/>).

## Admission Requirements

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree (any major is acceptable), and provide a completed application form, a transcript of all undergraduate course work, and letters of recommendation.

Admission is competitive. The minimum requirements for unconditional admission are the baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution, an undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Those applicants whose native language is not English and who do not hold a degree from a university where the language of instruction is English, must complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a score of at least 79 on the internet-based test, the

International English Language Testing System (IELTS), with a minimum score of 6.5 or Duolingo score of 105.

## Application Deadlines

The program maintains a rolling admissions policy. Target dates include:

**Fall semester:** July 15

**Spring semester:** November 15

**Summer semester:** April 15

## Application Materials

The following materials must be submitted via the Graduate School website (<http://graduate.louisville.edu/apply/>):

1. **Graduate Application**
2. **Application Fee**
3. **Transcript(s):** Transcripts of your college records from all of the schools you have attended must be submitted to the Graduate School, Graduate Admissions. Students must have earned an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university.\*
4. Those for whom English is not their native language must also submit TOEFL scores.\*
5. **Three Recommendation Letters:** Three letters of recommendation from academic sources are required and must be submitted online to the Graduate School, Graduate Admissions.

The committee for reviewing student applications will consist of faculty currently serving on the Sustainability Council's Education Committee.

For answers to commonly asked questions by applicants, please review the Frequently Asked Questions (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/futurestudents/admissions-faq-for-prospective-graduate-students/>) page of the Graduate School website.

\*There are additional requirements for international students. These requirements are listed at [louisville.edu/graduate/futurestudents/international-applicants/international-students/](https://louisville.edu/graduate/futurestudents/international-applicants/international-students/) (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/futurestudents/international-applicants/international-students/>).

## Accelerated Degree Admissions Process

Students should apply to these programs in their junior year. Advising to ensure the requirements are met without extraneous credit hours is imperative and strongly recommended for timely degree completion and financial considerations for the accelerated degrees. Please be sure to consult with advisors and the director of the master's program.

### Special Requirements for Accelerated Master's Degree Program Admission

1. An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better
2. Completion of SUST 101, 201, 202, 301, 302 and 303 with a minimum GPA of 3.0

The accelerated degree program allows a student to complete the Bachelor of Arts in Sustainability and the Master of Arts or Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies: Concentration in Sustainability over a five year period. The first four years consist of undergraduate studies, including three core sustainability graduate level courses taken

during the senior year, culminating in the award of the Bachelors of Arts in Sustainability degree. Core courses should include PLAN 675, SUST 602, and research methods.

The fifth year consists of graduate coursework leading to completion of the Master of Arts or Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies:

Concentration in Sustainability. The accelerated curriculum allows students to apply 9 credit hours of graduate core course work taken during their undergraduate studies towards the completion of both the BA and Master's degrees. An additional semester of research may be required to complete a thesis for the Master of Science degree.

## Program Requirements for a Master of Arts Degree

| Code  | Title   | Hours     |
|---|---|-----------|
| <b>Required Course</b>  |   | <b>3</b>  |
| PLAN 675  | Introduction to Sustainability                |           |
| <b>Core Courses</b>   |   |           |
| Students are required to take one course in each Core Area:               |   |           |
| <b>Sustainability and the Built Environment</b>                           |   | <b>3</b>  |
| PLAN 670  | Sustainable Development and Planning          |           |
| UPA 679   | Environmental Policy                          |           |
| <b>Sustainability and the Natural Environment</b>                         |   | <b>3</b>  |
| SUST 602  | Sustainability and the Natural Environment    |           |
| <b>Sustainability and the Social Environment</b>                          |   | <b>3</b>  |
| ANTH 522  | Ecology, Politics and Culture                 |           |
| PLAN/PADM 673   | Behavioral Dimensions of Urban Sustainability |           |
| UPA 673   | Behavioral Dimensions of Urban Sustainability |           |
| UPA 606   | Research Methods                              |           |
| Research Methods or Statistics course in the student's selected Core Area |   | 3         |
| Seminar   |   | 3         |
| Capstone  |   | 3         |
| Guided Electives within Core Areas (see below)                            |   | 9         |
| <b>Minimum Total Hours</b>  |   | <b>30</b> |

## Program Requirements for a Master of Science Degree

| Code  | Title   | Hours    |
|---|---|----------|
| <b>Required Course</b>                                      |   | <b>3</b> |
| PLAN 675  | Introduction to Sustainability                |          |
| <b>Core Courses</b>   |   |          |
| Students are required to take one course in each Core Area: |   |          |
| <b>Sustainability and the Built Environment</b>             |   | <b>3</b> |
| PLAN 670  | Sustainable Development and Planning          |          |
| UPA 679   | Environmental Policy                          |          |
| <b>Sustainability and the Natural Environment</b>           |   | <b>3</b> |
| SUST 602  | Sustainability and the Natural Environment    |          |
| <b>Sustainability and the Social Environment</b>            |   | <b>3</b> |
| ANTH 522  | Ecology, Politics and Culture                 |          |
| PLAN/PADM 673   | Behavioral Dimensions of Urban Sustainability |          |

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| UPA 673   | Behavioral Dimensions of Urban Sustainability |           |
| UPA 606   | Research Methods                              |           |
| Research Methods or Statistics course in the student's selected Core Area |   | 3         |
| Seminar   |   | 3         |
| Thesis  |   | 6         |
| Guided Electives within Core Areas (see below)                            |   | 9         |
| <b>Minimum Total Hours</b>  |   | <b>33</b> |

Students will work with their academic committees to select the core and elective courses needed. It is strongly recommended that a student's committee distribute elective courses such that at least three (3) or four (4) credit hours are in an area other than that of the student's home department. Other courses may be acceptable with the program director's approval.

### Built Environment

| Code     | Title  | Hours |
|----------|--|-------|
| CEE 660  | Transportation Planning and Urban Development    | 3     |
| CEE 661  | Environmental Analysis of Transportation Systems | 3     |
| CEE 681  | Green Engineering & Sustainable Design           | 3     |
| GEOG 536 | Sustainable Transportation                       | 3     |
| LAW 902  | Real Estate Transactions                         | 2-3   |
| PLAN 670 | Sustainable Development and Planning             | 3     |
| PLAN 607 | Land Use Planning                                | 3     |
| PLAN 622 | Urban Design                                     | 3     |
| PLAN 623 | Environmental Policy and Natural Hazards         | 3     |
| PLAN 625 | Historic Preservation and Sustainable Practice   | 3     |
| PLAN 636 | Site Planning                                    | 3     |
| PLAN 650 | Capstone Studio                                  | 6     |
| UPA 648  | Housing and Community Development                | 3     |
| UPA 672  | Public Management                                | 3     |
| UPA 679  | Environmental Policy                             | 3     |
| UPA 680  | Special Topics in Urban and Public Affairs       | 1-6   |

### Natural Environment

| Code                 | Title   | Hours |
|----------------------|---|-------|
| ANTH 528             | Animals and Humans                                | 3     |
| ANTH 531             | Anthropology of Water                             | 3     |
| ANTH 535             | Nutritional Anthropology                          | 3     |
| BIOL 567             | Conservation Biology                              | 3     |
| BIOL 644             | Global Change Ecology                             | 4     |
| BIOL 660             | Advanced Ecology of Urban and Suburban Landscapes | 4     |
| BIOL 663             | Advanced Population and Community Ecology         | 4     |
| BIOL 667             | Advanced Conservation Biology                     | 4     |
| ENVS 663             | Climate and Environmental Change                  | 3     |
| LAW 903/<br>SUST 703 | Land and Ecosystem Conservation                   | 2-3   |

## Social Environment

| Code     | Title   | Hours |
|----------|---|-------|
| ANTH 530 | Human Impacts on Past Environments                              | 3     |
| ANTH 540 | Health and Civilization   | 3     |
| ANTH 626 | Food Justice  | 3     |
| ART 692  | Art, Thinking & Social Change                                   | 3     |
| GEOG 500 | Globalization Seminar   | 3     |
| HIST 610 | Introduction to Historic Preservation                           | 3     |
| HIST 611 | Studies in American History                                     | 3     |
| HSS 675  | Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Individual Level | 3     |
| HSS 676  | Community Health Promotion and Disease Prevention               | 3     |
| HSS 697  | Special Topics in Health and Sport Sciences                     | 1-3   |
| LAW 931  | Environmental Law   | 2-3   |
| LAW 939  | First Amendment Law   | 2     |
| PHEH 620 | Global Issues in Environmental and Occupational Health          | 3     |
| PHEH 651 | Advanced Environmental Health Services                          | 3     |
| PHPB 612 | Health Communications Campaigns: Theory and Practice            | 3     |
| PHPB 722 | Health Risk Communication                                       | 3     |
| PLAN 673 | Behavioral Dimensions of Urban Sustainability                   | 3     |
| PLAN 674 | Sustainable Urbanism  | 3     |
| PLAN 676 | Sustainable Social-Ecological Systems                           | 3     |
| POLS 639 | Seminar in International Relations                              | 3     |
| SOC 710  | Statistics II   | 3     |