Sustainability, PhD

SUSUSTPHD

Research and develop solutions to sustainability challenges that bridge disciplines. Learn from leading scientists and scholars in this customizable, interdisciplinary program.

Program description

Degree awarded: PHD Sustainability

The PhD program in sustainability prepares students to become scientists and leaders in research who investigate the urgent sustainability challenges of this century. The flexible, transdisciplinary nature of the program allows students to focus on problems of interest to them, drawing upon relevant knowledge from sustainability science and a variety of disciplines. This full-time program includes a high degree of faculty interaction and collaboration.

All sustainability doctoral students gain a better understanding of the need for a transdisciplinary approach to solving sustainability challenges as well as the ability to communicate their research effectively to academic and non-academic audiences alike.

In addition to the common learning outcomes, students are able to conduct research on particular sustainability challenges using theoretical lenses and methods from sustainability science and a range of complementary disciplines. Students learn to translate sustainability challenges to tractable research questions; develop a portfolio of quantitative and qualitative research methods to address these research questions; formulate and test hypotheses; utilize rigorous elicitation methods to gather qualitative and quantitative datasets; learn to engage with stakeholders to co-produce knowledge; use statistical and other analytic techniques to analyze data; and build and apply models of social-ecological systems.

They develop expertise in the analysis of institutional policies and regulations, as well as the design of the built environment and technologies, to support sustainable development. They also develop the foundational knowledge of concepts and methods required to conduct interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and effectively communicate their findings across academic disciplines, as well as to policymakers and the general public.

Graduates possess an advanced understanding of the dynamics of coupled social-ecological systems and use this knowledge to conduct original research to inform robust solutions to specific sustainability challenges. They are equipped to lead others in the development of sustainable strategies at the local, national and global levels.

At a glance

- College/School: <u>College of Global Futures</u>
- Location: <u>Tempe</u>

Degree requirements

86 credit hours, a written comprehensive exam, a prospectus and a dissertation

Required Core (11 credit hours)

SOS 510 Perspectives on Sustainability (3)
SOS 520 Research Design and Methods for Sustainability (3)
SOS 525 Social-Ecological-Technical Systems (SETS): Domains and Interfaces (3)
SOS 589 Community of Graduate Student Scholars (2)

Solutions Workshop Electives (6 credit hours)

Open Electives (45 credit hours)

Research (12 credit hours) SOS 792 Research (12)

Culminating Experience (12 credit hours) SOS 799 Dissertation (12)

Additional Curriculum Information

Students take SOS 589 twice for one credit hour. For electives, students should see the academic unit for the approved course list. Other coursework may be used with the approval of the academic unit. Only six credit hours of 400-level coursework can be included in the plan of study.

When approved by the student's supervisory committee and the Graduate College, this program allows up to 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree to be used for this program. If students do not have a previously awarded master's degree, the remaining coursework is to be made up of appropriate electives.

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the College of Global Futures.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree in any field from a regionally accredited institution. The school encourages applicants with diverse educational backgrounds and experiences that are relevant to the school's core objectives.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

- 1. graduate admission application and application fee
- 2. official transcripts
- 3. statement of intent
- 4. three letters of recommendation
- 5. resume or curriculum vitae
- 6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide <u>proof of English proficiency</u> regardless of their current residency.

The statement of intent should not exceed 600 words and should describe how the applicant's background will contribute to success in the program; describe how completion of the degree will support long-term career goals; elaborate on key research questions the applicant wishes to address or problems to solve as part of the plan of study; and identify potential faculty advisors.

Letters of recommendation must be from three people who can attest to the applicant's academic and professional achievements. At least one letter should be academic in nature.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about <u>ASU tuition and financial aid</u> options to find out which will work best for them.

Application deadlines

Fall

expand

Global opportunities

Global experience

Studying abroad is encouraged for graduate students. Nearly all of the College of Global Futures faculty-directed programs offer graduate credit. In addition, the Global Education Office offers more than 50 program opportunities, with programs on every continent.

Faculty-directed programs tend to be the best fit for graduate students; taking courses with ASU professors over the summer or during academic breaks offers students close mentorship and professional network growth in many fields of study while they earn ASU credit. Exchange program participation is also possible with careful planning.

Students can find programs specific to their interests on the <u>College of Global Futures Study Abroad</u> <u>webpage</u>, and additional opportunities and information on the <u>ASU Global Education Office website</u>. These sites also include additional information about applying for funding to support global travel.

Graduate students are also encouraged to apply for funding for international research, study and professional development through ASU's Lorraine W. Frank Office of National Scholarships Advisement.

Career opportunities

Professionals with expertise in sustainability frameworks and interdisciplinary research are in high demand across industries, including business, academia and government. Skills in critical thinking, teamwork, sustainability problem solving and research are valuable to businesses and institutions, many of which are in need of expertise to solve critical sustainability problems and introduce sustainability principles into their business models.

From the School of Sustainability's 2022 alumni employment survey, 100% of doctoral program respondents are employed. Of those respondents employed, 100% have jobs directly related to sustainability. Students can learn more about careers in sustainability and where graduates of sustainability doctoral programs are now employed by visiting the School of Sustainability's <u>alumni</u> employment data website.

Career possibilities for program graduates include:

- chief sustainability officer
- data analyst
- environmental scientist
- geographic information systems coordinator
- professor
- program manager or director
- research scientist
- sustainability consultant
- sustainability policy advisor
- sustainability specialist

Contact information

<u>School of Sustainability</u> | WCPH 3rd floor <u>SustainabilityGrad@asu.edu</u> | 480-727-6963 <u>Admission deadlines</u>