The Wisconsin School of Business Graduate/Professional Certificate in Business, Environment, and Social Responsibility (BESR) is designed for UW–Madison graduate students who want to broaden their understanding of sustainable business practices. This certificate provides the real-world skills and knowledge needed to manage enterprises that integrate economic, environmental, and social decision-making in their daily operations.

Students in the Certificate in Business, Environment, and Social Responsibility Program will acquire career-enhancing knowledge of:

- The causes of environmental and social challenges facing the business world, and the respective policy and business responses to those challenges
- Frameworks and measurement systems for incorporating sustainability concerns into business analysis and decision-making
- The chief areas in which business activities and sustainability concerns intersect

They also will acquire in-demand skills that enable them to:

- Analyze the causes of and responses to environmental and social problems, as well as develop and implement solutions to these problems
- Identify and apply frameworks for effectively incorporating sustainability considerations into the analysis and decision-making of managers and policymakers
- Analyze where and how environmental and social issues impact business concerns and develop effective management solutions for these scenarios

As determined by each student’s individual course path, students will acquire deeper knowledge and skills in select domains such as systems design, risk management, green real estate, and more. Students are also encouraged but not required to participate in a variety of events and activities that provide a forum to exchange ideas and connect the business community with students and faculty interested in sustainability.

**ADMISSIONS**

The BESR certificate is open to any student with graduate standing at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Before beginning the application to the graduate/professional certificate, students should gather the information listed below.

- Current GPA
- Advisor's name and email address
- Planned semester to begin the certificate

**REQUIREMENTS**

The required foundation course, advanced business sustainability coursework, and electives from across the campus need to tally a minimum of 12 credits. The slate of coursework options available for fulfilling the certificate program is shown in the table below. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in related non-credit sustainability experiences via competitions, conferences, and speaker events.

The foundation course has no prerequisites and is open to all graduate students on campus. Students will: (1) take one required foundation course (M H R/ENVIR ST 710 Challenges & Solutions in Business Sustainability), (2) choose at least 3 additional credits from a list of School of Business advanced business sustainability coursework, and (3) select up to 6 credits of additional courses from other elective coursework.

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
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M H R/ENVIR ST 710 | Challenges & Solutions in Business Sustainability (spring) | 3
**School of Business - Advanced Business Sustainability**

**Classes** choose at least 3 credits from list:

- OTM 770 Sustainable Approaches to System Improvement 4
- REAL EST 651 Green - Sustainable Development 3
- R M I 650 Sustainability, Environmental and Social Risk Management 3

**Other Elective Coursework** Up to 6 credits from other elective coursework can be counted towards the required 12 certificate credits.

**School of Business**

- ACCT I S 700 Financial Accounting 3
- ACCT I S 710 Managerial Accounting 3
- ACCT I S 771 Seminar in Strategic Cost Management and Performance Measurement 3
- FINANCE 700 Introduction to Financial Management 3
- M H R 728 Bargaining, Negotiating and Dispute Settlement for Managers 3

**College of Agricultural & Life Sciences**

- M H R 723 Business Strategy 3
- MARKETING 700 Marketing Management 3
- OTM 700 Operations Management 3
- OTM 732 Economics for Managers 3
- R M I 700 Principles of Risk Management 3
- R M I/GEN BUS 701 Managing Legal Risks 3
- ECON/A A E/ENVIR ST/URB R PL 671 Energy Economics 3
The list of electives is dynamic and will be adjusted as new courses are being offered and others dropped. Students may request to substitute listed electives with courses that are currently not listed. Such a request requires that the student explains how the substitute class meets the learning outcomes of the certificate and assists the student in reaching his or her individual goals for taking the certificate. The request requires approval by the certificate director in coordination with the Certificate Oversight Committee.

For courses with access restricted to School of Business students, non-business school students may select equivalent open-access lower-level courses numbered 300 and above (e.g., substitute MH R 723 Business Strategy with MH R 423 Strategic Management).

**Extracurricular Activities** *(Certificate students are encouraged, but not required, to engage in extracurricular activities that enhance the certificate’s learning outcomes.)* These include:

- Speaker events such as the Weston Lecture Series
- Competitions such as Walmart's Sustainable Business Plan Competition and Burrill Business Plan Competition
- Conferences such as the Nelson's Institute Annual Earth Day conference and Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council Conference

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Gain knowledge of (i) causes of environmental and social challenges related to business and respective policy and business responses, (ii) frameworks and measurement systems for incorporating sustainability concerns into business analysis and decision-making, and (iii) domains in which business activities and sustainability concerns intersect and the management of these intersections.

2. Acquire skills to (i) analyze causes of and responses to environmental/social problems; develop and implement solutions as managers and policymakers, (ii) identify and apply frameworks for incorporating sustainability considerations into analysis and decision-making, (iii) analyze where and how environmental and social issues intersect with business and develop and implement solutions.

3. (i) develop/articulate view of role business plays in sustainability, (ii) use knowledge and skills in business to strengthen sustainability and in sustainability to strengthen business, (iii) create network of likeminded individuals, acquire ability to engage with professionals outside their fields, and grow appreciation of how different professions contribute to business sustainability.