The mission of the civil and environmental engineering program is to develop leaders in education, industry, and government who can use their acquired skills to improve society. The academic program provides a comprehensive framework of courses in the broad area of civil and environmental engineering with opportunities to develop specialized expertise. It also emphasizes the development of integrated teamwork abilities, communication, leadership, entrepreneurship, and creative research skills. Graduate study in the department offers an opportunity to undertake advanced study and research in various areas of specialization. Areas include:

- **Construction engineering and management**: construction labor productivity management, integrated lean project delivery systems, risk management, advanced computer applications to construction, and change management
- **Environmental engineering**: water supply, water quality, water treatment, wastewater treatment, solid and hazardous waste management, air pollution, biotechnology, and alternative energy
- **Geo and pavement engineering**: geotechnical and geological engineering, pavement materials and design, asphalt binders and mixtures, geosynthetics, in-situ testing and engineering geophysics, recycled materials in sustainable construction
- **Structural engineering**: behavior, analysis and design of reinforced/prestressed concrete, steel, and wood structures; design for earthquake and wind loading; seismic rehabilitation
- **Transportation engineering**: highway and traffic engineering, intelligent transportation systems, connected and automated vehicles, transportation planning, freight, and infrastructure management, transportation safety, user comprehension and behavior, advanced driving- and micro-simulation, big data
- **Water resources/environmental fluid mechanics**: analysis, measurement, modeling of currents, flows, and waves in natural and constructed systems; surface and groundwater hydrology; hydraulic engineering; coastal engineering; sedimentation and transport processes; infrastructure impacts of extreme weather events, hydroecology and stream restoration

Students may also pursue studies in the broad fields of environmental engineering/science and systems analysis. Areas of specialization are organized into a constructed facilities division (including transportation engineering, structural engineering, construction engineering and management, pavement engineering, materials for constructed facilities, and geotechnical engineering) and an environmental engineering division (including geoenvironmental engineering, environmental fluid mechanics and water resources engineering, environmental science and technology, and environmental and water chemistry).

Degrees require a coordinated core program of courses, selected from CEE and other department/program offerings. Graduate degree programs closely associated with the department include engineering mechanics, human factors, environmental chemistry and technology, water resources management, geological engineering, land resources, and limnology and marine science.

In support of the instructional and research programs are laboratory facilities for structural engineering; highway materials; transportation systems; driving simulation and human factors; soil mechanics, geotechnical and geoenvironmental engineering, coastal and hydraulic engineering, environmental fluid mechanics; environmental engineering processes and engineering chemistry. Water resources engineering, environmental engineering, and water chemistry have additional research facilities in the Water Science and Engineering Laboratory on the shore of Lake Mendota. The Environmental Engineering Field Laboratory is located at the Nine-Springs Madison Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant.