ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION, M.S.

This is a named option in the Environmental Conservation M.S. (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/environmental-studies/environmental-conservation-ms/#text)

The Environmental Conservation named option is a 15-month blended learning curriculum designed to train conservation leaders in practical interdisciplinary skills. Built on the legacy of pioneering environmental leaders such as John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and Gaylord Nelson, alongside current leaders in the field of conservation, the program helps early-career working professionals advance their leadership and environmental management expertise through campus learning and remote experiences.

With curricula in conservation planning, land use policy, and in professional skills such as applied GIS, conservation fundraising, protected area management, program evaluation, and strategic communications, students are better prepared to tackle complex challenges in a changing world. Students also engage directly with a range of conservation organizations and practitioners, helping to solve some of the most urgent challenges in biodiversity conservation and environmental protection.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program’s website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s). Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>This program does not admit in the fall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>December 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)</td>
<td>May be required in certain cases; consult program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proficiency Test</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letters of Recommendation Required

Although applications for the professional master’s with a named option in Environmental Conservation (EC) will be accepted on a rolling basis, applications received by December 1 each year will be given preference for admissions purposes and tuition assistance. Applications are submitted online (https://apply.grad.wisc.edu/) through the UW-Madison Graduate School. Applicants will need to create a username and password to access the application system. For current or former UW students, this will be a new account that does not use your NetID. When applying for our MS program select the summer term for the calendar year you are applying for, and then choose Environmental Conservation in the drop-down tab. Prospective students who apply by December 1 will be informed of their admissions status by late January.

Ideal candidates for our program will have approximately two to five years of professional work and/or field experience, preferably in the conservation sector, though candidates with diverse professional and academic backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Applicants must have received a bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year institution with an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher. Applicants with GPAs below 3.0 may be considered for admission under special circumstances. No additional prerequisite classes are required for the EC named option.

Complete applications will include all items below. For applicants who have a GPA below 3.0, the GRE is required. For those who have GPAs at 3.0 or above, GRE scores are not required for admission to the EC named option. Admissions decisions will be based on the entirety of each applicant’s credentials.

1. Professional credentials/resume
2. Reasons for graduate study/statement of interest in this program or field
3. Two letters of professional recommendation; one letter from a current or former employer and one letter from a former university advisor are preferred. Although the online UW-Madison application gives you the option of adding three references, only two references are required for this program.
4. One copy of undergraduate transcripts submitted electronically in the application
5. Supplemental application (found in UW-Madison online application)
6. GRE scores (dependent on undergraduate GPA)

For foreign students, TOEFL or IELTS scores are also needed. The minimum TOEFL score required is 92 for the internet-based test (iBT) and 580 for the paper-based test (PBT). The minimum IELTS score required is 7.0. Applicants with language scores below these requirements may be considered for program admission under special circumstances. The UW-Madison Graduate School also requires proof of sufficient tuition funds for foreign applicants accepted into the program.

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School.
Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

Students enrolled in this program are not eligible to receive tuition remission from graduate assistantship appointments at this institution.

This applies to both the Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Observation & Informatics named options. We encourage all students to apply for our Environmental Conservation tuition assistance program, and to seek additional sources of grants, scholarships, or loans.

For more funding information, visit the program’s website: https://nelson.wisc.edu/graduate/professional-programs/costs-and-funding/

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

**NAMED OPTION REQUIREMENTS**

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Instruction Definitions</th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>Half of degree coursework (16 credits out of 32 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (<a href="https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/(https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/)">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/(https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/)</a>).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Grade Requirements</td>
<td>The Graduate School requires a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in all coursework (300 and above) taken as a graduate student unless program-specific conditions require higher grades for probationary status. Grades of Incomplete (I) are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments and Examinations</td>
<td>All students must submit a leadership placement proposal and work plan, complete a professional leadership experience (independent practice) of at least eight weeks, followed by a substantial written report or deliverable for their host organization, and an exit seminar presentation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Requirements</td>
<td>No language requirements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REQUIRED COURSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR/URB R PL 843</td>
<td>Land Use Policy and Planning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 951</td>
<td>Conservation of Biodiversity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 972</td>
<td>Conservation Planning</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 974</td>
<td>Environmental Conservation Cohort Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 975</td>
<td>Environmental Conservation Leadership Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 976</td>
<td>The Practice of Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 978</td>
<td>Environmental Conservation Tools Modules</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 979</td>
<td>Environmental Conservation Professional Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVIR ST 999</td>
<td>Advanced Independent Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives in consultation with advisor. Most electives will be taken in ENVIR ST. Please check with program about electives outside of ENVIR ST.</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in this program may not take courses outside the prescribed curriculum without faculty advisor and program director approval. Students in this program cannot enroll concurrently in other undergraduate or graduate degree programs.

**POLICIES**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES**

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding
general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

**NAMED OPTION–SPECIFIC POLICIES**

**PRIOR COURSEWORK**

**Graduate Work from Other Institutions**
No credits from another institution are allowed to count toward the program.

**UW–Madison Undergraduate**
With program approval, up to six credits of selected coursework taken as a UW–Madison undergraduate student may count toward the EC program curriculum. Those credits taken as an undergraduate student cannot count toward the graduate residence or graduate coursework requirements, but they can count toward the graduate degree requirement if the courses were at least 300 level and completed within three years of matriculating in the program.

**UW–Madison University Special**
With program approval and payment of the difference in tuition (between special student and graduate student), up to six credits of selected coursework taken as a UW–Madison special student may count toward the EC program curriculum. Those credits taken as a special student cannot count toward the graduate residence or graduate degree requirements if the courses were at least 300 level and completed within three years of matriculating in the program, and they can also count toward the graduate coursework requirement if the courses were 700 level or above.

**PROBATION**
The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above). This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School. The status of a student falls into one of the following three categories:

1. **Good standing** (progressing according to standards; any funding guarantee remains in place).
2. **Probation** (not progressing according to standards but permitted to enroll; loss of funding guarantee; specific plan with dates and deadlines in place in regard to removal of probationary status).
3. **Unsatisfactory progress** (not progressing according to standards; not permitted to enroll, dismissal, leave of absence or change of advisor or program).

**ADVISOR / COMMITTEE**

Every student in the program will be required to have an advisor. Program staff will work with the student to identify an advisor during the spring semester. Once an advisor has been identified, the student is expected to maintain communication with their advisor to ensure they are making satisfactory progress toward their degree.

**CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED**
15 credits

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**
If a student has been absent for a semester or more, they must file a new Graduate School application for admission and submit it with a new application fee. UW–Madison master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits they had earned before their absence. The program may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence toward meeting EC named option requirements, but the Graduate School will not count that coursework toward their graduate residence, graduate degree, or graduate coursework requirements.

**GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS**

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
- Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
- Dean of Students Office (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

This document was reviewed by the Graduate Student working group and approved by vote of Nelson Institute Governance with subsequent review by campus HR; please note that this was prior to the revision of GAPP by campus in 2019-20, as well as present and expected changes in 2020 after the vote of Nelson Institute Governance, as well as present and expected changes in 2020 after the vote of Nelson Institute Governance.

**Preamble:**
Any student who feels that they have been treated unfairly by a faculty or staff member has the right to seek redress and to receive a hearing of the grievance following these procedures. It applies only to grievances about those persons who are employees of the Nelson Institute, who teach for the Nelson Institute or otherwise are subject to administrative oversight by the Institute. The complaint may concern course grades, program admission, classroom treatment, hostile or intimidating behavior, or any other issue. Note that these procedures are for students bringing grievances to the Nelson Institute, they do not cover issues relating to the classroom behavior of students which must be referred to the Dean of Students.
The procedures outlined below are used in the Nelson Institute to ensure a prompt and fair hearing of complaints, and to protect the rights of both the student and the person at whom the complaint is directed. These policies describe formal procedures. A student is free to bypass these procedures if they do not wish for an Institute sanctioned resolution.

A complaint covered here may involve issues that either require or that would benefit from being directed to one of the campus programs or offices addressing complaints and grievances. See https://compliance.wisc.edu/ and https://compliance.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/102/2018/09/Safe-Learning-and-Work-Guide.Fall_FY19-Accessible.pdf (Accessed Oct. 2020). Please review the most recent information on Title IX on campus, as guidelines and contacts may change. Graduate students should review information available at https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/ (Accessed Feb. 2019)

Undergraduate students may wish to review information available in the undergraduate course catalog. There they will find this option presented: “For assistance in determining options, students can contact the on-call dean in the Dean of Students Office, 608-263-5700, Room 70 Bascom Hall, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.”

Also, students should know that academic administrators may be required to report instances of sexual harassment or violence in accordance with university policy and the Clery act. (See: http://uwpd.wisc.edu/crime-data/clery-act/ Accessed Oct. 2018).

State law contains additional provisions regarding discrimination and harassment. Wisconsin Statutes 36.12 reads, in part: “No student may be denied admission to, participation in or the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any service, program, course or facility of the system or its institutions or center because of the student's race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status or parental status.” In addition, UW–System prohibits discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression. Students have the right to file discrimination and harassment complaints with the Office for Equity and Diversity.

Questions about Nelson Institute procedures can be directed to the Associate Dean for Research and Education.

**Procedures:**

1. If possible, the student (complainant) should first talk with the person against whom the grievance is directed to advise them of their complaint and to determine if resolution is possible.

2. If the student is not satisfied, or if they do not feel comfortable addressing the person to whom the grievance is directed, they should ask to speak to the immediate supervisor of the person involved. If the complaint is directed against a teaching assistant, the student should talk to the TA’s supervisor, who is usually the course professor. If the student grievance concerns a faculty or staff member in Nelson, the next formal step is for the student to meet with the Associate Dean for Research and Education. If the complaint is not resolved at this level, the student may continue to the next step (4).

3. It is recognized that a student may be reluctant to bring their grievance to the person against whom the complaint is directed, or to their supervisor, or to anyone else in the administrative hierarchy. In that case, the student should seek out a person who can guarantee confidentiality to the extent allowed by the law and university policy and provide non-judgmental advice as to appropriate next steps. Note that if criminal activity is involved confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. If a student does not know of any suitable person, they may approach any member of the Nelson Institute Academic Programs staff who will be able either to serve as a confidential discussant or who will be able to direct the student to someone who can assure confidentiality. Their role is to be that of Ombuds, meaning that they are not to take a position with respect to the validity of the grievance. Their role is to advise the student as to appropriate next steps.

4. To start a formal grievance process, the student must submit the grievance in writing to the Nelson Institute Associate Dean for Research and Education (hereafter Associate Dean) as soon as possible. An email for which receipt is acknowledged will be considered a written submission.

5. On receipt of the written complaint, the Associate Dean will acquaint themselves with the issues. This may involve face to face meetings or other means of establishing the facts in dispute. The Associate Dean will have the option of proposing a resolution. If the proposed resolution is accepted by parties directly involved, the matter will be considered settled at this level. Relevant documents will be archived by the Office of the Assistant Dean for Administration. At any point in the proceedings after the receipt and acknowledgement of the grievance by the Associate Dean, the complainant or the compliance will have the option of requesting that the matter be referred to an ad hoc committee. This request must be submitted in writing and acknowledged by the Associate Dean.

6. If the matter cannot be settled through the mediation of the Associate Dean, or if the Associate Dean has concluded that the case merits further attention, or if the complainant has requested that the matter be referred to an ad hoc committee an ad hoc committee will be appointed by the Dean of the Nelson Institute or their designee. The committee will consist of at least three members. Within 10 working days, the student will be allowed to revise the complaint or to add material to the complaint document to be provided to the committee. The complainant may request a change in committee membership, but the final decision on the committee will remain with the Dean. The committee may request a written response from the person toward whom the complaint is directed. The ad hoc committee will meet to discuss the case. They are authorized to seek additional information if they feel it is necessary. They will convey their written decision regarding the case including any recommendations for remediation or mediation to the Associate Dean within 30 working days from the charge to the committee. The Associate Dean will provide a copy of the committee’s written decision to the student regarding the case within 10 working days of receiving the committee’s report; the Associate Dean will also confirm that the past record on file of any grievances regarding the parties involved has been investigated; and, the Associate Dean will provide the student a statement outlining the formal plan of steps that will be taken officially on the part of the Nelson Institute.

7. The complainant then has the option of taking their grievance to the university level. There are several options available. Consult websites referenced above.

8. The written documents relevant to the grievance will be archived in hard copy and electronic form as appropriate in a “Grievance Record” by the office of the Assistant Dean of Administration and will be maintained for a minimum of five years.

9. The cumulative record involving any of the parties to a grievance will be reviewed each time a formal grievance is presented as in Step 4, above, in order to determine whether the pattern
of grievance, such as past filings, indicates any actions are warranted.

**OTHER**

Because of the immersive nature of our program, with condensed time on campus and remote experiences, Environmental Conservation students are only eligible for campus appointments that total 30% time or less, or hourly work. We encourage all students to apply for our Environmental Conservation program tuition assistance, and to seek additional sources of grants, scholarships, or loans. Students in the Environmental Conservation program are not permitted to seek dual degrees or take courses outside of the listed required coursework.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

For more information about professional development and careers with the degree, visit the program’s website: https://nelson.wisc.edu/graduate/professional-programs/careers/

**PEOPLE**

**FACULTY EXECUTIVE PROGRAM COMMITTEES**

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM COMMITTEE:**

Timothy Van Deelen (program chair), Holly Gibbs, Zuzana Burivalová, Alberto Vargas, Rob Beattie, Steph Tai (ex officio)

**ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATION & INFORMATICS PROGRAM COMMITTEE:**

Annemarie Schneider (program chair), Mutlu Ozdogan, Steph Tai (ex officio)