The tracks are:

- **Design History (DH Track)**
  Design History seeks to understand design in its historical context, as both a process and a product. Our program defines design broadly to include architecture, interior design, industrial design, decorative arts, and other areas of material culture. The Design Studies department offers many opportunities for interdisciplinary study on the UW–Madison campus and has strong ties to other disciplines including art history and landscape architecture. Design History Ph.D. students also have access to coursework and faculty members from allied programs, including the Material Culture Studies Certificate and the Buildings–Landscapes–Cultures Program (a collaborative research degree offered through UW–Madison and UW–Milwaukee).

- **Environmental Design Research (EDR Track)**
  Environmental Design Research addresses the interaction between people and their built, natural, and/or virtual environments with a clear goal to create environments that are sustainable and responsive to human needs. The faculty and graduates of the program have pioneered studies in environment-behavior, evidence-based design, building evaluation, sustainability, aging and environment, children's environment, environments for special population, and emerging technologies and applications of virtual reality.

- **Textile Science (TS)**
  Textile Science investigates the interaction of dyes and finishes with fibers, yarns, and fabrics. Faculty and students in this program focus on sustainability and work to develop chemicals and processes that are safer for the end-user, textile workers, and the environment. Students achieve this by developing and using chemicals, dyes, and finishes, and by reducing the amount of chemicals, water, and energy used in these processes. The DS Textile Lab offers equipment for textile quality control, dyeing, finishing, and plasma. The Materials Science Lab offers analytical equipment such as ESCA, an Atomic Force Microscope, an Electron Microscope, and FTIR. Depending on their research interests, students will have the opportunity to work with other UW–Madison departments including Chemistry, Material Science, Forestry, or Electrical and Computer Engineering.

These tracks are internal to the program and represent different pathways a student can follow to earn this degree. Track names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.