Human ecology is the study of the complex relationships between human beings and their environments. The school offers a doctorate of philosophy within four named options/specializations:

- Civil Society and Community Research (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/human-ecology-school-wide/human-ecology-phd/human-ecology-civil-society-community-research-phd/) (CSCR)
- Design Studies (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/human-ecology-school-wide/human-ecology-phd/human-ecology-design-studies-phd/) (DS)

Each named option has its own faculty, curriculum, requirements and includes a challenging array of coursework along with exciting opportunities for research, outreach, and service consistent with each student's scholarly interests and career aspirations.

As part of a Research I institution, SoHE faculty members have national reputations in their fields of study and are highly committed to nurturing future scholars and practitioners. They conduct research and mentor students to address issues that cross disciplinary lines. They work closely with graduate students to create courses of study that match each student's personal and professional goals.

The School of Human Ecology has a strong tradition of outreach and counts several faculty members with budgeted extension appointments among its ranks. But all faculty members devote time and resources to ensuring their work benefits others beyond the campus. These efforts reflect the Wisconsin Idea, (http://wisconsinidea.wisc.edu/) the notion that the university's boundaries are those of the state, nation, and beyond. Graduate education at SoHE encompasses this mission by stressing the integration of research with program design and implementation, administration, policy development, and evaluation.