University of Wisconsin
Master of Science in Sustainable Management
Frequently Asked Questions

What is sustainability? Why is it important?
Sustainability refers to a simple idea: meet the needs of today without compromising the resources of future generations. It is a harmonious balance that allows natural, social and environmental systems to prosper together. As our global community continues to flourish, sustainability will play an increasingly larger role in business.

What is the triple bottom line?
The triple bottom line is the basis of sustainable business management. It stands for the consideration of strong profitability and vibrant communities within a healthy environment.

Why choose a career in sustainable management?
Every industry confronts sustainability issues on a daily basis. A Master of Science in Sustainable Management gives students the technical, management, and environmental knowledge they need to tackle an economy where balancing the triple bottom line of profitability, people and planet is critical to a company’s success.

What career paths might this program benefit?
The success of any organization rests on its ability to effectively manage limited resources in a closed environment. In that way, all organizations would profit greatly from a sustainable management master’s graduate who can optimize resource utilization while protecting the environment in which the entity operates.

There are endless career options for graduates. From implementing energy-efficiency standards at a dairy farm to creating a sustainability scorecard for a health and beauty corporation, our students have brought their skills to a wide range of different organizations.

What type of student is this program geared toward?
The program is aimed at environmentally conscious professionals looking to advance in their current position or become more marketable as they pursue a new career. Working parents, professionals and veterans will find the flexibility inherent in the online nature of this program to be especially convenient.
Is this program available online?
The master’s program is administered solely online, making it easy for students to meet their educational goals while balancing a busy work and home life. UW offers an online demonstration/training course to help students get comfortable with the online format. There are no on-campus meetings or requirements. Books and materials are available through an online bookstore.

What subjects are covered?
The curriculum integrates science, management, and sustainability so that students can address the pressing concerns of the 21st century, including climate change, renewable resources and industrial ecology. Subject areas include economics of environmental sustainability, environmental studies, information systems, natural resource management and triple bottom line accounting for managers.

What is the Capstone project?
The Capstone course is the culmination of the master’s program, designed to put the knowledge and skills developed through study to work. After having their proposal accepted, the student researches, creates and implements a project in sustainability. Projects will be located in the student’s home area and will not require travel.

What are the admission requirements?
Enrollees must have a 3.0 GPA and bachelor’s degree from a regionally or nationally accredited university to be accepted into the program. No other prerequisites, including the GRE or other entrance exams, are required. To be considered for admittance, students must submit an electronic admission application and a $56 application fee, along with their college and high school transcripts.

Are there any course prerequisites?
While there are no official course prerequisites, successful master’s students will have knowledge of biology, chemistry, algebra, statistics, and public speaking.

How does this program differ from the sustainable management bachelor’s degree?
The master’s degree builds on the success of the UW online bachelor’s degree program by deepening triple bottom line systems knowledge and providing greater real-world experience. Students also further their postgraduate career opportunities, opening themselves up to the advanced leadership positions that require extensive knowledge of sustainability practices.
Which universities are involved with the program?
The degree was developed in collaboration with five University of Wisconsin System campuses: UW-Superior, UW-Parkside, UW-Stout, UW-Green Bay, and UW-Oshkosh. While all master’s students choose a home campus for administrative purposes, online courses are taught by faculty from all five campuses.

Who are the instructors for the program?
Faculty from all five participating campuses teach the program. While all master’s courses are administered online, they possess exactly the same rigor, requirements and top-notch faculty as their on-campus counterparts.

How long does the degree typically take to complete?
It depends whether students opts for full- or part-time participation in the program. The Master of Science in Sustainable Management consists of eight 3-credit courses, two 3-credit electives, and a 4-credit Capstone experience. Students may take these courses in any order, with the exception of the Capstone course, which must be taken at the end of the program. Courses are offered in the fall, spring and summer sessions.

Students are encouraged to consider their own time constraints when evaluating time to completion. Students who are juggling career, family or volunteer obligations may require a slower pace.

Is financial aid available?
A variety of financial aid opportunities are available for returning adult students. Students may contact the Financial Aid office at their home campus for detailed information.

Are there benefits for veterans?
Yes, benefits are available for veterans. Contact the Veterans Coordinator at your home campus for detailed information.

What are the tuition and fees?
Tuition is $675 per credit. With the exception of a 4-credit Capstone experience, all courses are three credits (34 credits total). While there are no additional course or program fees, students are responsible for purchasing their textbooks.

Where can students get textbooks?
All textbooks are available through the program’s virtual bookstore or can be purchased from other sources.

**When will the degree be offered?**
UW is now accepting enrollment for the Spring 2013 semester.

**Are there specific enrollment times?**
Students can enter the program at the beginning of any term (fall, spring or summer).