

MA and MS in Sustainability

The Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MS) in Sustainability are research-oriented degrees that focus on knowledge generation and designing new ways to address sustainability challenges. In these programs, students learn how different disciplines view and approach the challenges of sustainability in theory, research and practice. They develop the academic and technical skills as well as the ethical insights that will help them understand, research and develop solutions to complex sustainability challenges at local, regional, national and global levels. The program culminates with research writing (either a thesis or scientific paper).

Although the programs integrate a broad range of expertise in student training, the MA degree is best suited to students inclined toward social sciences, humanities, planning and related fields, while the MS degree is suited to those interested in natural sciences, economics, engineering, technology and related fields.

Course requirements

The program of study includes a minimum of 35 credit hours. In summary:

	Credits
Core Courses	14
Methods Elective	3
Normative Dimensions of Sustainability Elective	3
General Electives	9
Thesis or Scientific Paper	6
Total Credits Required	35

Core courses

- **SOS 510: Perspectives on Sustainability** employs case studies from engineering, architecture, social sciences and natural sciences to facilitate discussion about the major challenges faced in forming a sustainable future at local, national and global levels.
- **SOS 520: Research Design and Methods for Sustainability** helps students design their own research and place it in the context of other disciplines or bodies of work.
- **SOS 525: Social-Ecological-Technical Systems (SETS) Domains & Interfaces** guides students in thinking about complex systems in a sustainability context. Students use a sustainability problem or theme to explore the concepts presented in the course.
- **SOS 581: Synthesis for Sustainability Research** challenges students to link their own research and writing to other disciplines and the broader field of sustainability research.
- **SOS 589: Community of Scholars** provides opportunities to develop new skills, foster community with other students and faculty, and gain support from the SOS alumni network.

Methods elective

Students take at least one methods course pertinent to their research. This elective is chosen from a pre-approved list of courses offered by faculty in the School of Sustainability.

Normative dimensions of sustainability elective

Students choose from a variety of courses designed to teach them how to evaluate the values and ethics pertinent to an issue, field or body of work related to sustainability. Students choose a course in consultation with their supervisory committee and can obtain a list of pre-approved electives by emailing sosgradadvising@asu.edu.

General electives

The selection of these courses is left to the discretion of students and their supervisory committees. These courses should give students depth of knowledge in the domains, interfaces and competencies needed to conduct their research.

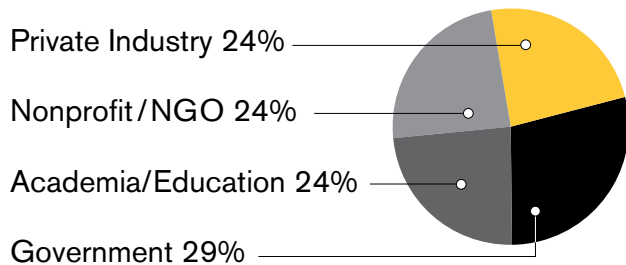
Thesis or scientific paper

Students will devote six credit hours to writing either a thesis or a publishable scientific paper. During the semester(s) in which the culminating experience credits are taken, students work with their supervisory committees to research, write and revise their document and prepare for a final, public defense of the work.

Careers

The MA/MS alumni are employed in a variety of settings, including government, private industry and academia.

Employment data (2019) for MA/MS alumni:



100% of master's degree alumni are employed. **86%** of those employed are working in a sustainability-related role.