

School of Environment and Sustainability

Master of Environment and Sustainability (MES)

The Master of Environment and Sustainability (MES) program provides students the opportunity to advance their understanding of environment and sustainability, thus preparing them for significant roles in knowledge generation, translation and decision-making. Students can explore the meaning of interdisciplinary research by considering a wide range of scientific, technical, political, social, economic, and institutional factors that shape environmental problems, their management and their potential solutions.



The MES is a thesis-based program that can be completed in two years of full-time study. Students are required to complete a thesis based on original research and a minimum of 12 credits of course work, consisting of:

- Three core classes (nine credit units);
- One elective course (three credit units), from anywhere on campus, with approval from the student's advisory committee.

Students are required to register in, attend and participate in ENVS 990: Seminar in Environment and Sustainability. Students meet the requirements for ENVS 990 by participating in the seminars and by presenting results of their own research. Completion of the research requirement is met when a student's thesis is successfully defended and approved.

MES Program Curriculum Required Courses

All MES students are required to complete the following three courses:

ENVS 801.3 – Ecosystem Science and Sustainability

An introduction to how principles and concepts of ecology and ecosystems science are applied to advance environmental sustainability. Students will gain a solid understanding of how natural systems function, and how scientists apply their understanding and uncertainties about ecosystems to address environmental management problems and advance environmental sustainability.

ENVS 802.3 – Human Dimensions of Environmental Change

This course explores the past and present interactions between people and the natural world. It addresses ways that environment has molded human societies and ways that people have altered nature. Contemporary concerns for environmental sustainability are introduced by examining human entanglement with a range of natural and modified systems.

ENVS 803.3 – Research in Environment and Sustainability

The purpose of this course is to introduce graduate students to conceptual, practical, and ethical issues in conducting interdisciplinary research about environment and sustainability. By the end of the course, students will have a research plan from which their proposal and research activities can be developed.



“The interdisciplinary approach to the MES program gives me a unique opportunity to acquire knowledge concerning environmental issues and sustainability from a broad field of courses, and also to apply this knowledge in my thesis-based research project. The mixture of science and social science provides me with valuable insights that together with the research project make me well-prepared to address issues of societal importance in a diverse range of fields.”

Åsa Almstedt
MES student

Elective Courses

In addition to the nine credit units of required coursework, students must select three credit units of elective course work within or related to their area of specialization. Students are advised to consult their faculty supervisor and advisory committee when selecting elective courses. A student may take a 400-level undergraduate course to fulfill the elective requirement with the approval of their advisory committee. Credit may be granted for graduate-level courses taken previously at the University of Saskatchewan or another university, provided they have not already been credited toward a bachelor's or advanced degree.

Career Paths

The School of Environment and Sustainability's MES program prepares graduate students for exciting research or management careers with government, consulting firms, academic institutions, industry and non-governmental organizations. Students completing the MES degree may choose to pursue a PhD.

Application Deadline

Students should ideally apply for the MES program by February 15 for a May or September start. Applications will be accepted anytime, but early application is encouraged. Applications submitted after February 15 of each year have limited access to scholarship funding.

To be admitted as a fully qualified MES student, applicants must have the equivalent of a University of Saskatchewan honours bachelor's degree, with an average grade of at least 70% over the last 60 credit units (or equivalent) of their undergraduate program or another graduate degree.

To be eligible for scholarship funding, students must have obtained at least 80% in the last two years of undergraduate or graduate study. Candidates must meet the admission requirements of the College of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Saskatchewan, as detailed on its website www.usask.ca/cgsr.

More Information

For more information regarding our programs, courses, pre-requisites, tuition and scholarships, please call (306) 966-1985 or visit www.usask.ca/sens.

