

Graduate Programs in Environmental Studies

Future Students Viewbook



environmental &
urban change

YORK
UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

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A Message from the Director

Liette Gilbert, PhD

Greetings,

On behalf of our program faculty and staff, we welcome you to the Graduate Program in Environmental Studies at York University.

Since its inception in 1968, the Environmental Studies graduate program has advanced an interdisciplinary approach combining natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and the arts in order to study the most pressing socio-environmental problems. The program promotes a self-directed approach redefining the boundaries and relations between natural, built and human environments. For this reason, the range of subject matters studied and researched together over the Faculty's history has been as diverse as students themselves. This is really the strength of our program!

As one of the first Environmental Studies graduate programs in Canada, a multitude of accomplished alumni have contributed, through private, public and non-profit sector and academic positions, to solving environmental issues in Toronto and across the globe. All together and with you, we study, design and implement strategies to effect and attain a more sustainable and just environmental present and future locally and globally.

Sincerely,

Liette Gilbert, PhD

Professor and Director of the Graduate
Program in Environmental Studies

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Creatively redefine the boundaries of environmental research

Since the PhD program was established in 1991, ES PhD program students have worked at the cutting edge of critical, interdisciplinary Environmental Studies research. Benefitting from our rich research culture and dynamic, supportive community, ES PhD students undertake a four-to-six year degree tailored to their individual research, career, and personal goals. As a direct result of their individual research programs, our PhD alumni have found prestigious positions in academia, government, and the nonprofit and community sector, both nationally and internationally.

The PhD Program in Environmental Studies is organized in four stages: Program Plan, Comprehensive Examinations, Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation. Students are required to take two courses: ENVS 8102 PhD Research Seminar and ENVS 8103 PhD Research Design Workshop. Students are supported to develop their otherwise flexible, individual programs by a dedicated supervisory committee, representing and facilitating their interdisciplinary research interests.

Students may research such vital issues as:

- Applied ecology and conservation
- Critical urban studies
- Environmental and social justice
- Environmental humanities
- Arts-based research and community arts practice
- Global political ecology and critical development studies
- Indigenous and decolonizing approaches to environmental research
- Socio-environmental health
- Environmental policy and management
- Critical approaches to energy and climate change
- Urban, regional, and environmental planning

The PhD Program



4-6 Years



Full-Time



Fall Entry

Doctor of Philosophy
(PhD)



Melvin Chan, PhD Candidate

Research Topic | "Rescuing Rabbits: An Institutional Etho-Ethnography of Rabbit Welfare, Affects, and Advocacy"



Scan the QR Code for the complete details on the PhD Program.

Master in Environmental Studies (MES)

The Master in Environmental Studies program prepares students to be agents of environmental and urban change through research, teaching, activism, artistic and professional practice

Join an interdisciplinary masters program that challenges you to look at natural, socio-cultural and built environments differently. In this program, centred on an individual Plan of Study, you will learn how to redefine the boundaries of environmental research to create positive social and environmental change.

Critical Issues

- Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Transitions
- Environmental, Climate, and Indigenous Justice
- Urban and Regional Planning and Infrastructures
- Ecological Economics and Sustainability Analytics
- Environmental, Climate, and Indigenous Justice
- Environmental Arts, Culture, and Justice
- Critical Theories of International Development and Global Inequities
- Environmental Management and Conservation
- Sustainable Food Systems
- Environmental Education

The MES Program



2 Years



Full-Time



Fall Entry

**Master in Environmental
Studies (MES)**



Desmond Asiedu, MES 2025



Scan the QR Code for the complete details on the MES Program.

Master in Environmental Studies Planning (MES Planning)

We are committed to inspiring and preparing students for planning careers that push the frontiers of urban, environmental, and geographical knowledge

We are changemakers, working toward more just and sustainable cities and regions, drawn together from multiple disciplines to address the pressing challenges facing people, communities, and the planet. Through our accredited planning curriculum—which builds on required courses, a self-directed plan of study, work experience, and research—you will gain advanced knowledge and professional skills to empower you to manage and address urban challenges, from growing inequality to climate change.

You will have the opportunity to focus on one or more of the following areas of specialization: Urban and Regional Planning; Environmental Planning; Community, Social Policy and Planning; or you can define your own. You will acquire theoretical and applied knowledge to design, analyze, and implement plans, policies, and programs as you contribute to city-building and effect positive change at every scale of action over the course of your career.

Becoming A Registered Professional Planner

An accredited degree is a first step in becoming a Registered Professional Planner with the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) and other provinces and territories in Canada.

The MES-Planning Program



2 Years



Full-Time



Fall Entry

**Formal accreditation
by the planning
profession in Canada**



Scan the QR Code for the complete details on the MES Planning Program.



MES Planning Students

Master in Environmental Studies/Juris Doctor (MES/JD)

Joint program with Osgoode Hall Law School

Study in the only joint law and environmental studies program in Canada, offering you the opportunity to gain both a Master in Environmental Studies degree and a Juris Doctor. Through cutting-edge interdisciplinary teaching and research in law and the environment, you will explore how these two critical fields intersect.

This unique program brings together one of Canada's premier law schools with one of its most innovative environmental studies programs. It draws upon Osgoode's recognized strength in social justice, environmental, planning and aboriginal law, and Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change's acclaimed leadership in interdisciplinary environmental studies.

The program attracts a small group of some of the best students interested in environment and law nationwide. Graduates of the program have gone on to a variety of positions in government, private law firms, non-profit organizations, business, the academy and other settings.

The MES/JD Joint Program offers students the opportunity to complete both the MES and JD degrees in just under four years, approximately one year less time than it would take to complete the two degrees separately.

The MES/JD Program



4 Years

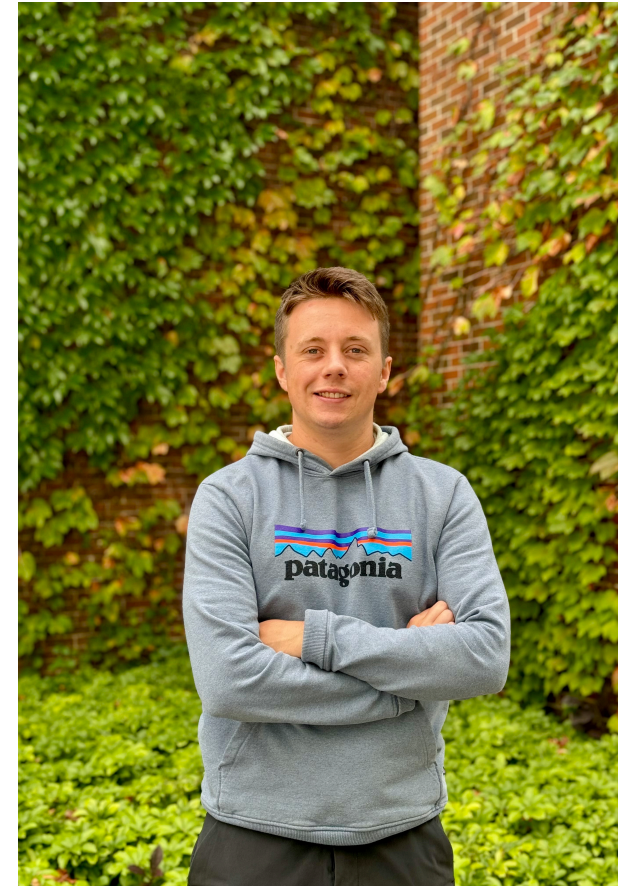


Full-Time



Fall Entry
(in both programs)

**Master in Environmental
Studies/Juris Doctor
(MES/JD)**



MES/JD Student Henry Challen



Scan the QR Code for the complete details on the MES/JD Program.

Graduate Diplomas

Diploma in Business and the Environment

The Business and the Environment graduate diploma provides the perspectives, understanding, tools, skills and recognition for York Masters graduates to become leaders in business and the environment. A highlight of this program includes an internship or placement in an organization or agency with a focus on business and the environment.

Requirements of the Diploma

- Coursework (12 credits), internship, and Business and the Environment component in Plan of Study and Major Research.

Who is eligible for this Graduate Diploma?

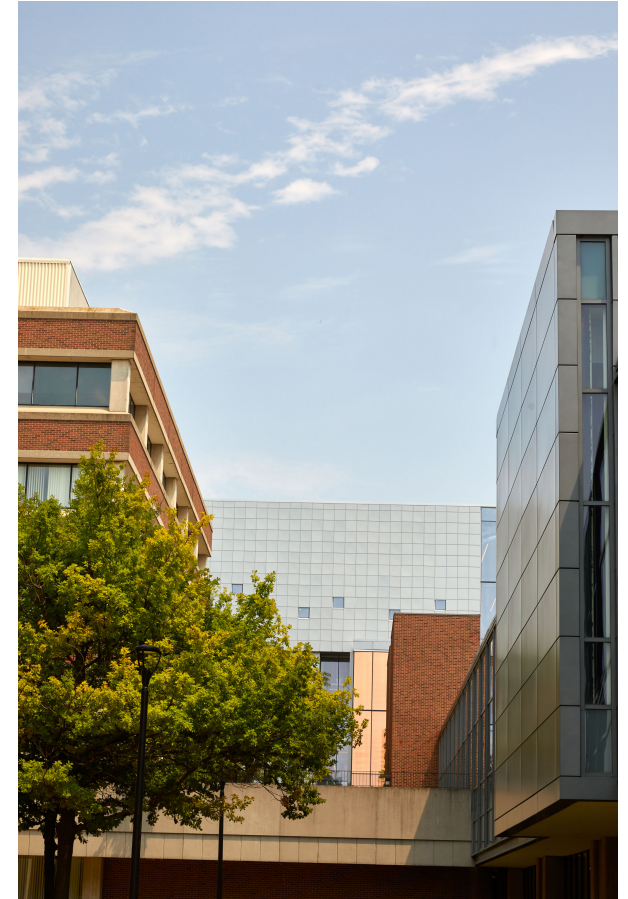
- MES students who wish to complete this Graduate Diploma concurrently.

Diploma in Environmental Sustainability Education

The Environmental Sustainability Education graduate diploma responds to long-standing interest in environmental and sustainability education from teachers, graduate students, park interpreters and conservation authorities. It is an opportunity for participants to focus their studies on the environmental implications of education and the role of education in sustainability in its broadest sense.

Requirements of the Diploma

- Coursework (12 credits), and Environmental Sustainability Education component in Plan of Study and Major Research.



Scan the QR Code for the complete details on the Diploma in Business and Environment



Scan the QR Code for the complete details on the Diploma in Environmental Sustainability Education

Meet your Program Coordinators



Ute A. Lehrer, PhD

Coordinator, MES Planning Program

eucplan@yorku.ca

I am trained as an urban planner with a critical edge, and believe that the purpose of teaching is to help students to develop skills for critical thinking. I have published in the fields of urban planning and urban design, in particular on the land question, gentrification, high-rise living, mega projects and public space.



Mark Winfield, PhD

MES Program Coordinator, MES/JD Program Coordinator, Co-Chair, Sustainable Energy Initiative (SEI)

eucmes@yorku.ca

I have published articles, book chapters and reports on a wide range of climate change, environment and energy law and policy topics. I have acted as an advisor to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario and federal Commissioner for Environment and Development.



Catriona Sandilands, PhD

Coordinator, PhD Program in Environmental Studies

esphd@yorku.ca

I am a writer and environmental humanities scholar whose interests lie at the intersections of queer, multispecies, and feminist ecologies. My recent publications include works on botanical biopolitics, queer ecopoetics, public environmental humanities, and storytelling as a form of climate justice work.

Research Themes



Environmental Studies brings together ecologists, physical scientists, social scientists, humanities researchers and artists whose innovative research seeks to advance sustainability and social justice. Using field-based science, policy analysis, critical social theory, planning skills, geomatics, and cultural and arts-based approaches, our researchers drive action to address the world's environmental and urban challenges.

EUC Research Themes

- Environmental Science for Sustainable Ecosystems
- Towards Urban Social Justice
- Seeking Environmental, Climate and Food Justice
- Building Just and Sustainable Global Relations
- Planning Sustainable Transitions
- Mobilizing the Arts for Change



Scan the QR Code for more information on our research projects.

Current Student Research



Raquel Mendes

PhD Student

My research investigates how practices of reciprocity beyond the human might impact multispecies communities in the urban environment using research-creation methodology.



Cole Webber

PhD Student

My research considers how rental housing evictions in Toronto affect evicted tenants' working conditions.



Kelly Gingrich

PhD Student

My research focuses on climate change education, degrowth and climate-just transitions.



Nilanjana Ganguli

PhD Student

My research investigates how climate change is reshaping transactional sex in Malawian fishing communities, positioning it as an adaptation strategy while exposing its complex drivers and consequences for physical and mental health.



Scan the QR Code for more information on our PhD students.

Current Student Spotlights



Gurneet Singh

MES Student

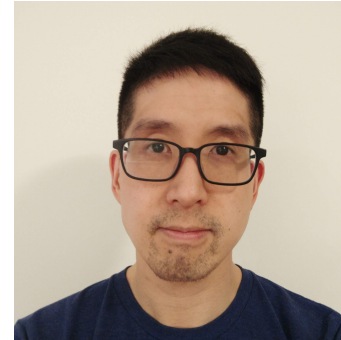
My research focuses on environmental policy, climate change and sustainable energy transitions.



Jasmine Palmer

MES Student

My research focuses on energy system transformations in the Caribbean. I am also pursuing the Business and the Environment diploma.



Ehren Cheung

MES Student

My research explores how introducing indoor vertical agriculture within highrise residential buildings shapes residents' social relationships, belonging, and community life.



Kyra Vergara

MES Student

Through analyzing the marketing used to promote master planned communities as synonymous with sustainability and luxury, my research critiques the commodification of sustainable urban planning.

Did you know? The Faculty of
Environmental & Urban Change has

175 Graduate
students



Scan the QR Code for more information on our current Environmental Studies graduate students.

Alumni Spotlights



Camille Turner (PhD in Environmental Studies 2022, Master in Environmental Studies 2012)

Artist, Camille Turner Studios

Camille Turner is an artist who explores themes related to race, space, home, and belonging. Her work combines Afrofuturism and historical research. She is a Master's and PhD graduate of York University's Environmental Studies program, and received the Toronto Biennial's Artist Prize for her contribution to the 2022 Toronto Biennial of Art exhibit.



Tamo Campos (Master in Environmental Studies 2022)

Filmmaker, Impact Practitioner, Community Organizer, and Extreme Sports Athlete

Tamo Campos is a filmmaker, impact practitioner, community organizer and extreme sports athlete dedicated to combining social impact with his adventures in sport, activism, and filmmaking. Tamo's work has focused on Indigenous land defense, Indigenous health models, climate justice and anti-racism.



Mike Layton (Master in Environmental Studies 2006)

Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO), York University

Mike Layton is a former Toronto City Councillor and long-time champion of sustainability. He brings two decades of professional experience—and a lifetime of lived experience in advancing positive changes that contribute to a more equitable and sustainable world. As CSO, Mike will lead York's Office of Sustainability, building on the university's strong track record.



Pino Di Mascio (Master in Environmental Studies 1995)

Partner, SVN Architects + Planners

Pino Di Mascio is a Partner at SvN Architects + Planners where works with clients to create impactful and strategic developments. He focusses on achieving and enhancing environmental and social outcomes across SvN's existing and future projects.

Alumni Spotlights



Cara Clairman (Master in Environmental Studies/Juris Doctor 1993)

CEO and President, Plug n' Drive

Cara Clairman has more than 20 years of experience working in the environmental and sustainability fields, including 12 years working at Ontario Power Generation, initially as OPG's environmental lawyer and later in the role Vice President of Sustainable Development. Cara is the CEO and President of Plug'n Drive, is a non-profit that is accelerating the deployment of EVs.



Hawa Mire (Master in Environmental Studies 2017)

Principal Consultant, HYMIRE Consulting

Hawa Mire is the Principal Consultant at HYMIRE Consulting. She is a proven strategic senior leader, equity consultant and community organizer with non-profit experience focused on high-impact community development. Hawa completed a Master's degree in Environmental Studies where her research examined community storytelling as a place of transformation.



Ian McVey (Master in Environmental Studies 2011)

Manager of Sustainability, The Regional Municipality of Durham

Ian McVey is the Manager of Sustainability at Durham Region (The Regional Municipality of Durham). Ian is an experienced professional who has worked in both public and private sector organizations to develop and implement sustainability strategy initiatives, performance measurement, and reporting activities.



Pablo Bose (PhD in Environmental Studies 2006)

Professor, University of Vermont

Pablo Bose is a Professor in the Department of Geography and Geosciences and Director of the Global and Regional Studies Program at the University of Vermont. He is a migration scholar and urban geographer whose research explores the complex relationships between people and place and especially in the ways that flows of capital, labour, bodies, and ideas transform various landscapes.

Financial Support

Funding in the MES program

Full-time MES students are offered a fellowship. The fellowship is disbursed equally over the 6 full-time terms. Funds cover tuition fees, leaving the balance for living/studying expenses.

Funding in the PhD Program

PhD students are offered a guaranteed annual funding package for the first 4 years of their program. This package normally includes a fellowship and a teaching assistantship. As members of CUPE 3903, students become eligible for additional funding in Year 5 and 6 (if applicable). Fellowship covers tuition fees. Teaching Assistant wages include benefits.

Additional Funding

The program also offers many entrance scholarships. Students are invited to apply to the numerous internal scholarships offered in the Faculty of Environmental & Urban Change, the Faculty of Graduate Studies, as well as York University. We support students in the development of their applications to external (Tri-Council/OGS) scholarships. Fieldwork scholarships are also available.

If you have any questions about your funding, please contact Ouma Jaipaul-Gill at envsgrad@yorku.ca.



Graduate funding is contingent on

- Continuous registration as a full-time student
- Continued satisfactory performance
- Fulfillment of any funding-related employment obligations



Scan the QR Code for more information on graduate funding.

Admission Requirements

MES Program (MES Planning, MES/JD)

- Honours (four-year) undergraduate degree from an accredited institution B+ GPA over the past two years (or full-time equivalent) of academic study.
- Significant work or volunteer experience, or participation in other relevant activities that are determined to be equivalent to an Honours undergraduate degree.
- For MES/JD, apply and be accepted into both programs separately. You may apply to both programs simultaneously or during your first year in either program.

PhD Program

- Masters degree from an accredited institution
- B+ GPA or equivalent



How to Apply

1. Complete the York University online Graduate Application Form
2. Pay the application fee
3. Submit supporting documentation* through
YorkU's Online Portal: MyFile

*Supporting documentation includes:

- Transcripts
- Research Statement
- Resumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Supplementary Forms
- English language proficiency test

Prospective students must pay the application fee in order for their application to be processed. Once you pay, you will get an email with your MYFile Details. Myfile allows you to upload and track your application, and follow the checklist. Please be reminded that we only review complete files and only accept official documents.

Deadline for MES Applicants:

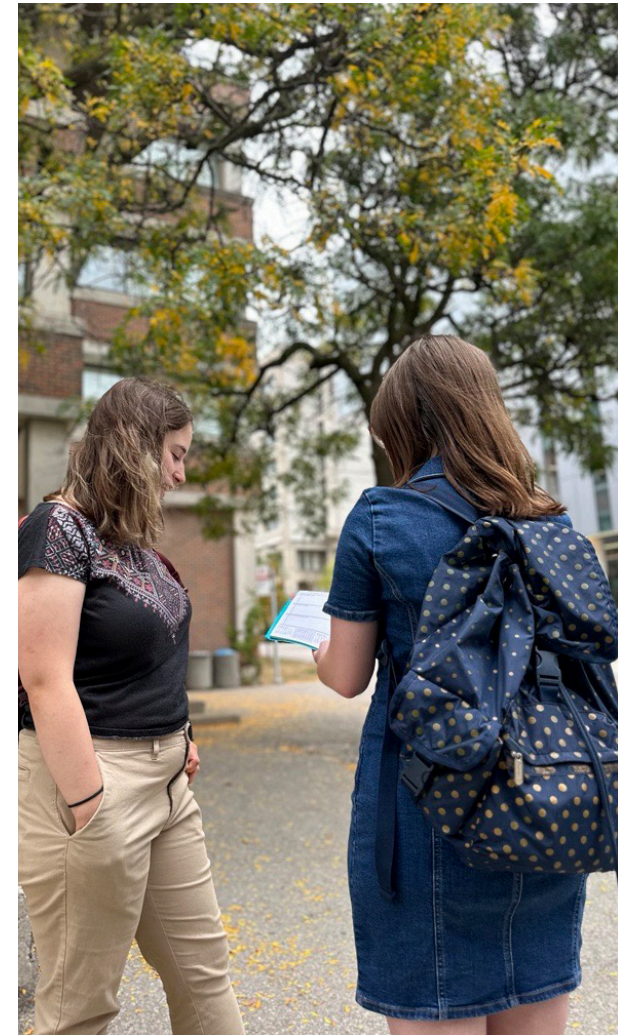
Fall 2027 Online Application:

February 15, 2027

Deadline for PhD Applicants:

Fall 2027 Online Application:

January 15, 2027



Scan the QR Code for more information on how to apply to our graduate programs.

CONTACT US

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YORKU.CA/DISCOVER/EUC

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