

SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIETY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY, B.A.

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Career Paths

This program prepares you to work wherever sustainability, equity, and environmental challenges intersect with decision-making. Your training in critical analysis—asking who benefits, what assumptions underlie initiatives, and how solutions play out unevenly across communities—is valuable across sectors. Graduates pursue careers evaluating and shaping sustainability efforts in organizations that increasingly recognize sustainability requires more than technical expertise. Many also continue to advanced study, bringing geographic and critical perspectives to graduate work in diverse fields.

Careers

Graduates fit into exciting careers across public, private, and non-profit sectors. Demand for critical sustainability analysis is growing, driven by investor expectations, international market requirements, and growing commitments to environmental justice and human rights—factors largely independent of domestic political shifts. Organizations need professionals who can evaluate sustainability claims, separate substance from greenwashing, and assess real risks and opportunities. Paths include policy analysis and advocacy, corporate risk assessment, and work with government agencies and NGOs on environmental justice. Graduates also pursue international and community development, and urban planning roles navigating competing interests around land use and resource access.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

This major provides strong preparation for graduate programs in geography, particularly those focused on human-environment interactions, political ecology, and urban geography. Your background supports advanced study in environmental studies, sustainability science, urban and regional planning, and public policy programs. Many graduates pursue law degrees focusing on environmental justice or land use, or public health programs examining environmental health disparities. Development studies, international affairs, and area studies programs value your critical approach to sustainability questions. Your interdisciplinary training and emphasis on equity positions you well for programs examining climate adaptation, environmental governance, social movements, or community resilience.

Professional Resources

- American Association of Geographers (AAG) (<https://www.aag.org/jobs-careers/>)
- American Planning Association (APA) (<https://www.planning.org/students/>)
- International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) (<https://www.sustainabilityprofessionals.org>)

- National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) (<https://www.naep.org>)
- Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals (PAEP) (<https://www.paep.org>)