

RISK ANALYSIS, COMMUNICATION AND POLICY GRADUATE MINOR

Graduate School

Program Description

This minor field integrates a number of approaches from the natural and social sciences to cope with decision making under uncertainty, especially for the environment. It complements disciplinary efforts ranging from engineering (infrastructure safety, decision theory, waste management) to life sciences (toxicology, food and water safety, resource conservation, invasive species/pest management). Quantitative and qualitative methods from the sciences are used not only in assessing risks but also in communicating them between affected parties and in the development of stewardship and public policies. Students must be admitted into a major field (not restricted by the minor), select one of the field members as a minor member for their committee, and then complete basic courses in risk analysis (requires some background in calculus and statistics) or ecological risk assessment, risk communication, public policy, and a seminar in risk issues. The foregoing applicable courses may come from the student's major or other minors, to expedite and focus this effort in some area of thesis research.

Graduate Minor Requirements

For students in graduate research degrees, earning a "minor" in a specific subject or concentration is not explicitly linked to the completion of coursework but is instead defined by the student's special committee.

Faculty serving on the student's special committee each represent a concentration. Because many graduate faculty are active in more than one graduate field or academic discipline, students and faculty should be clear about which concentration will be represented when a committee is formed.