



## Program FAQ

1. *When can I begin the program?*

The ISP admits students on a continuing basis and applications are accepted year-round. Students can enter the program five times a year: January, March, July, August and September.

2. *How do I apply?*

Follow the [checklist](#) given on our admissions page. We can begin to process your application once we receive the online application, receive academic transcripts and meet with you on campus for an interview. Once these steps are completed and we receive two reference names, a resume, and statement of purpose essay, we can make an admissions decision. Decisions typically take two to four weeks once these initial steps are completed. For potential Dual Degree MBA/MS students and MBA students seeking a concentrating in sustainable practice, acceptance to ISP does not guarantee acceptance to the College of Business. Students must apply to both the College of Business and ISP. You can review College of Business requirements [here](#).

3. *Do I have to have a science background?*

No, in fact, the vast percentage of our students **do not** have science backgrounds. As a unique program, we strive to be value-added to every discipline and profession. We help you examine and explore sustainability principles and apply them to whatever interests and opportunities excite you. We've had students go through our program who are architects, teachers, homebuilders, renewable energy enthusiasts, communications professionals, Peace Corps volunteers, waiters, and more. We've found that our students really enjoy learning from others with varied backgrounds, ages and career aspirations.

4. *What is the average student like?*

Our students range in age, from 24 - 65. Many students have 25+ years of work experience and are seeking a new career direction. Others are interested in gaining academic credentials in the field of sustainability. We also have young students fresh out of college. Though not a requirement for acceptance into the program, we do prefer for students to have at least a few years of work experience. If you don't have experience, we strive to make that a central goal of your educational journey at Lipscomb. We try to foster a diverse and unique group of individuals. Learn more about our current students and alumni [here](#).

5. *What about financial aid?*

We do not currently offer many opportunities for graduate assistantships or institute funding assistance because statistically, Master's degrees are proven to increase salary levels over time. Many students seek federal funding and loan assistance to pay for graduate school. Other students receive tuition assistance from their employers. For financial aid questions, contact Tiffany Summers at [Tiffany.Summers@lipscomb.edu](mailto:Tiffany.Summers@lipscomb.edu) or 615.966.6205. A FAFSA is required for federal assistance. Books, meals and most of the funding for travel courses is already provided through required tuition fees. Visit Lipscomb's financial aid website [here](#) for more information.

6. *What is the schedule like? Can I work while in the program?*

Most, if not all, of our students continue working in full-time or part-time/internship positions while in the program. Our courses are designed with the working professional in mind. All classes exist in a 30-day block, with courses meeting on Friday nights and Saturdays, twice a month per course. Each course will also have one initial night orientation meeting at the beginning of the course or two brief night orientation meetings per session and a course review session prior to the final lecture to ensure clear expectations. Every student should plan to reserve 3-4 nights per week while in the program for course work, reading and project work. Graduate school should be a transformative experience, correlated to the amount of time you invest in yourself and your personal and professional development.

7. *How long does it take to complete the program?*

Master's students can complete the program in 12-15 months if they stay on schedule and depending on their electives of choice. Certificate students can complete the program in about 6 months. Students may also stretch out their coursework for two years if work demands require more time.

8. *What is required for graduation?*

Please visit our [Academic Programs page](#) to view fliers for specific programs. Our certificate program requires 15 credit hours and our Master's program requires 30 credit hours. Green MBA students complete 9 hours of sustainability courses for the "green" concentration, in addition to the required business courses. Dual degree MBA/MS students complete 48 credit hours total, or 24 hours in both program.

9. *What exciting opportunities are available to me at ISP?*

The Institute for Sustainable Practice offers one of the only sustainability-focused graduate programs in the Southeast. Our reputation as innovators and leaders in the field attract expert speakers, lecturers and course instructors. We offer numerous ways for students to network, including the successful Green Business Summit we host each spring. We believe in using out-of-the-box curriculum, team-based projects and opportunities for real-world application. Students are also required to participate in at least one travel course with the institute – past travel experiences include trips to the Greenbuild Conference (28,000+ people in attendance), a "Roots of Sustainability" tour through Vermont, trips to the National Food Security Summit and more.

10. *What about after graduation?*

Sustainability is quickly becoming a popular field, through still growing in areas like the Southeast. Our program is very entrepreneurially designed and encourages students to take advantage of opportunities for personal and professional growth. We are proud to help our students become leaders in the field of sustainable practice.