PhD in Human Behavior & Sustainability Sciences, Northeastern University

[The Human Behavior and Sustainability Sciences PhD program](#) combines training in cognitive, behavioral, and social sciences with training in ecological, environmental, and sustainability sciences to produce boundary-breaking scholars who can accelerate sustainability solutions that are robustly informed by scientific research.

This doctoral program integrates coursework in Psychology, Sustainability Sciences (within the Marine & Environmental Sciences Department), and other relevant fields with specialized core courses and integrated cross-disciplinary research training. Emphasizing student-driven interdisciplinary connections, the program allows students broad latitude in designing an individualized program of study as they interweave work in environmental / sustainability sciences with work in human cognition and behavior.

The Human Behavior and Sustainability Sciences PhD is part of the [Connected Science Community](#) of PhD students across the College of Science.

Program Features

- Full funding, tuition remission, and health insurance for the 5-year duration of the program.
- Students create their own unique cross-disciplinary focus by integrating in a lab in Psychology and another in Marine & Environmental Sciences.
- Applications accepted on a rolling basis but preference will be given to those received by Jan 1 2024.
- We embrace a culture of respect and inclusion, strive to provide equitable opportunities and access to resources, and are committed to building a diverse and supportive community.
- [How to Apply](#)

Core Faculty

Psychology	Marine & Environmental Sciences
John Coley, [Conceptual Organization, Reasoning, & Education (CORE) Lab](#): Mental models of human's relationship with nature; anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism; cultural and experiential differences in ecological thinking; implications of environmental cognition for pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors.	**Jennifer Bowen,** [Microbial Ecosystems Ecology Lab](#): Understanding the role microbes play in the functioning of coastal ecosystems and how we can harness those microbes to create more sustainable coastal communities.
Sara Constantino, [Sustainability & Social Change Lab](#): Social and environmental policy and decision-making; understanding the interplay between individual, institutional and ecological factors on perceptions, policy preferences and resilience to extreme events or shocks; the role of polarization, social norms and governance in stimulating or stifling support for climate action.	**Gabriela Garcia,** [Socio-ecological Dynamics, Plant Ecology, and the Science-policy Lab](#): Examining socio-ecological plant systems that preserve biodiversity and foster resilience to a changing climate, including how plant population and community dynamics impact human well-being and management decision-making, and how those decisions feed back to influence ecosystem dynamics.
Juliet Davidow, [Learning & Brain Development Lab](#): Research bridging classic areas in psychology, neuroscience, and computer science, to investigate how learning behaviors change with age and can influence what is remembered, how decisions are made, and how goals are established.	**Ali Glassie**: [ocean literacy](#), environmental humanities, qualitative and narrative approaches, oral history. **Jonathan Grabowski**, [Fisheries and Restoration Science Lab](#): Integrating community and restoration ecology with ecological economics, social-ecological coupling, and fisheries and conservation science to inform decision-making and ecosystem management.
David Desteno, [Social Emotions Lab](#): Impact of moral emotions on phenomena requiring self-regulation; cooperation, pro-social behavior, moral and economic decision making, etc. and their implications for sustainability.	**Damon Hall**, [The Sustainability Science Lab](#): Representation and communication of social–ecological models; Cultural models in environmental decision making; Stakeholder engagement in environmental policy; Environmental communication.
Art Kramer, [Center for Cognitive & Brain Health](#): Influence of urban and wild green spaces on cognitive and brain health.	**Brian Helmuth**, [Climate Science and Policy Lab](#): Examining the effects of climate and climate change on the physiology and ecology of marine organisms to inform decision-making.
Brie Reid, [Reid Lab](#), How climate stress, environmental stressors, water insecurity, metal exposures, climate-change induced food insecurity, etc. can impact human development through prenatal/postnatal stress physiology and nutrient mechanisms.	**Randall Hughes**, [Marine Biodiversity and Conservation Lab](#): Investigating interactions among the numbers and identity of species, the genetic individuals that make up those species, the ecosystem services that they provide, and the people that benefit from and manage those services.
Aaron Seitz, [Brain Game Center for Mental Fitness and Well-being](#): Understanding mechanisms of cognitive processes and applying this knowledge for public benefit; conceptual change; decision-making; information processing.	**David Kimbro**, [Community and Restoration Ecology Lab](#): The pairing of field observations and experiments to understand the biological and environmental drivers underlying the maintenance and successful restoration of coastal habitats
Briony Swire-Thompson, [Psychology of Misinformation Lab](#): Why people believe in misinformation, why people share misinformation online, and how corrections can be designed to foster belief change.	**Kathleen E Lotterhos**. [Evolutionary Genomics Lab](#): Conservation genomics, aquaculture, selective breeding. We are interested in collaborating with social scientists to understand human attitudes toward genome-informed conservation solutions. **Aron Stubbins**, [Environmental Chemistry and Carbon Lab](#): The changing natural carbon cycle; plastics and their impacts in the environment; research includes a mix of analytical (geo)chemistry, fieldwork, laboratory experiments, remote sensing, and modeling.