PhD in Integrative Conservation

The Integrative Conservation (ICON) PhD program, founded by CICR, trains the next generation of environmental researchers and practitioners, providing students the knowledge to confront complex environmental challenges and the management and communication skills to work effectively across disciplinary boundaries and with practitioners and stakeholders.

The ICON program focuses on mentoring students to develop deep expertise through rigorous theoretical and methodological training in one of four disciplinary areas (Geography, Anthropology, Natural Resources, or Ecology), while also embracing one or more additional disciplinary framework(s) and combining them in innovative ways to carry out their dissertation research.

Through internships and collaborative research, students work with community members and conservation practitioners as partners and colleagues. These experiences, along with training modules in strategic communication, ensure that students learn strategies for effective communication across disciplines and with non-specialist audiences.

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ICON.UGA.EDU

CICR.UGA.EDU

The University of Georgia is a unit of the University System of Georgia. The University of Georgia is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.
Real-world environmental issues do not conform to disciplines found in universities. As we face complex problems due to climate change, resource degradation, and poverty, we need new approaches both inside and outside of the university.

The Center for Integrative Conservation Research (CICR) coordinates integrative research and instruction across disciplines. Through facilitation of interdisciplinary research and instruction, we seek to address social and ecological trade-offs associated with environmental conservation and sustainability challenges.

CICR’s Affiliated Faculty & Staff represent eleven of the seventeen colleges at UGA, and embody disciplinary perspectives spanning social and natural sciences and the arts and humanities.

CICR promotes interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches to research and teaching that employ insights and methodologies from across social and natural sciences to provide more robust understandings of the human-environment nexus. Programs include:

**Sustainability Science Symposium**
The annual Sustainability Science Symposium at UGA showcases the wealth of sustainability initiatives in research, instruction, and public service and outreach. Events encourage cross-disciplinary networking among faculty, staff, and students, and engage with the broader sustainability community locally and across the state of Georgia.

**Faculty Research Development Grant**
Through the Faculty Research Development Grant program CICR provides seed funding to support emerging integrative conservation and sustainability research initiatives at UGA.

**Eminent Scholar Series**
CICR brings cutting-edge leaders in conservation and sustainability to UGA. While on campus, visiting scholars lead workshops where they mentor students and collaborate with faculty, as well as deliver formal lectures that are open to UGA, the Athens community, and shared online.

**Integrative Instruction**
Integrative Conservation PhD Program (ICON): CICR coordinates ICON, a discipline-bridging PhD program focused on addressing 21st century social-ecological challenges. The ICON PhD is offered in Geography, Anthropology, Natural Resources, and Ecology.

**Sustainability Certificate**
CICR partners with the UGA Office of Sustainability and nine colleges at UGA to offer the Sustainability Certificate, which equips students with the skills to make significant, systemic changes in their communities, paving the way for a more sustainable future.

CICR FACULTY WORK WITH LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS COMPLEX SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

**Coastal Georgia**
Georgia, USA has 15% of the remaining salt marsh on the Atlantic coast despite having only 5% of the total coastline. Georgia’s salt marsh is critical for coastal livelihoods through its support of fisheries and wildlife, storm protection, ecotourism, and more. CICR researchers apply integrative approaches from both social and ecological sciences to support coastal resource management.

**Southern Appalachia**
The Coweeta Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) Program conducts groundbreaking research on climate and land use change in southern Appalachia. The Coweeta Listening Project was established by CICR researchers to enhance LTER science and management decision-making by establishing stronger relationships with local landowners, communities, and decision-makers.

**Kenyan Drylands**
Drylands cover 40% of Africa and support traditional pastoralist communities. These areas face drastic political and social change, unprecedented population growth, land degradation and more frequent droughts. CICR faculty use interdisciplinary approaches to evaluate vulnerability in Kenyan pastoralist communities struggling to sustain a livestock-based livelihood system.

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