The Heritage Leadership Learning Community engages students in serious discussion of topics related to sustainability, social justice, and participatory culture. Heritage encompasses the natural and cultural systems that sustain us, provide meaning and enjoyment, and inform our identities. Heritage leaders are interpreters, administrators, and advocates working in the museum, national park, refuge, historic site, and nonprofit space who foster diverse ways of knowing, build robust engagement pathways, and work for positive change.

Advocates for social justice have long recognized the link between social justice and environmental equity (i.e., equal opportunity to obtain environmental benefits and equal protection from environmental harms). Similarly, scholars have identified parallels between how we treat our most vulnerable citizens and how we treat the natural world. Ecology is complex, but human ecology is even more complex. Thus, heritage leaders facilitate an examination of such topics as bias, privilege, the intended and unintended effects of economic and governance systems, racism and other “isms,” historic trauma, oppression, modern slavery, symbolic meanings and interactions, ecological aesthetics, a land ethic, voice, agency, reconciliation, and healing truth. If you’re someone who embraces this complexity as central to the work, consider the Heritage Leadership Learning Community as a place to lean in, grow together, build skills for engagement, and produce work that will reframe the discussion and elevate the profession.

The Heritage Leadership Learning Community at the University of Missouri - St. Louis is an online doctoral degree program offering in-state tuition to students from any location. The third cohort begins August 2022.
It takes heritage leadership to sustain the natural systems that sustain us.

It takes heritage leadership to sustain cultural spaces, including those places where we encounter the other.