

GEOGRAPHY, PHD

The Department of Geography is a leader in the field of geography and offers exceptional opportunities for graduate education. The department has been consistently rated as one of the best in the country and for more than 100 years has been the training ground for generations of geographers. The department's strength is reflected in its ability to attract top-caliber students, compete for significant research funding, and publish foundational scholarly work. The department maintains strength across the full spectrum of subfields within the discipline and is organized into four major thematic areas: physical geography and earth system science, people and environment, human geography, and cartography/GIS.

Department faculty and graduate students represent a diverse community within which a wide range of perspectives, approaches, and research strategies are accommodated. The faculty has long been recognized nationally and internationally for outstanding contributions to geography and beyond. Many graduate students have gone on to prominence within government, industry, and academia and some of the most influential names in geography received their training in Madison.

The PhD degree is founded primarily upon specialized advanced training and research. Students may specialize in a single subdisciplinary area or a combination of areas and are expected to engage in research leading to a dissertation that makes an original and significant contribution to geographic knowledge and ideas.

The department takes in roughly 10–15 new graduate students each year. In recent years, about half of all incoming graduate students have completed an undergraduate major in a subject other than geography.

FACILITIES

Housed in historic Science Hall, the Department of Geography offers exceptional facilities for advanced study in geography, cartography, and GIS. The department maintains the University Cartographic Laboratory, the Arthur Robinson Map and Air Photo Library, a computer lab, several computer classrooms, and laboratory facilities specializing in biogeography, biogeochemistry, paleoecology, geomorphology, and soil research. In addition, the building houses the Wisconsin State Cartographer's Office, the History of Cartography Project, and the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies.

Graduate students may supplement their work in the geography department with study in other departments of the university, and there are frequent opportunities for advanced work in interdepartmental seminars. The location of the state capital at Madison makes possible easy contact with state agencies, and some federal agencies.

ADMISSIONS

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Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) of the**

Graduate School as well as the program(s). Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 15
Spring Deadline	This program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	This program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.
English Proficiency Test	Every applicant whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not exclusively in English, must provide an English proficiency test score earned within two years of the anticipated term of enrollment. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Requirements for Admission policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1241/).
Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

BREADTH REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must complete the equivalent of one undergraduate-level course in each subarea (Physical Geography, Human Geography, People-Environment Geography, Cartography/GIS). One course taken for breadth can also be used to fulfill degree requirements. Typically, these courses are not seminars. Most admitted applicants complete this coursework for breadth requirements prior to entering the program. Applicants who begin the program lacking one or more of the breadth courses are expected to complete such coursework by the end of the second semester in the program.

FUNDING

FUNDING GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/>) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

See "How Does Funding Work?" at the Geography Master's FAQ (<https://geography.wisc.edu/graduate/graduate-programs-faq/>).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (<http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/>)

#policiesandrequirements text), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement Detail	
Minimum Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	32 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	26 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/).
Other Grade Requirements	No other grade requirements.
Assessments and Examinations	Students must pass a general and specific qualifying exam. Student must orally defend dissertation proposal before a dissertation committee.
Language Requirements	Competence in a non-English language can be used to fulfill skills requirement.

Graduate School Breadth Requirement All doctoral students are required to complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate. Refer to the Graduate School: Breadth Requirement in Doctoral Training policy: <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200> (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200/>).

Students who choose to complete the Culture, History and Environment doctoral minor can use no more than one Geography course for the minor and that course must be outside of the student’s primary subarea of study.

REQUIRED COURSES

Code	Title	Credits
Core		
Students must complete the following course.		
GEOG 765	Geographical Inquiry and Analysis: An Introduction	1
Seminars		6
Students must complete two (3-credit) courses numbered 900 or above geography seminars with two different core or affiliate Geography faculty members. Students cannot use seminars completed as an MS student towards this requirement. See seminar options below.		
Skills Coursework		6
In consultation with advisor, students must complete 6 credits of intermediate or advanced courses numbered 300 or above. Any coursework completed as a graduate student can be used. Typically, students fulfill this requirement by completing one of the following four options. Credits earned as independent study (999) or research (990) cannot be used to satisfy this requirement.		
<i>Language Competence</i>		
Students may demonstrate competency through an oral assessment administered by a faculty member or instructor from the relevant language department OR complete the appropriate language coursework as selected in consultation with advisor.		
<i>Quantitative Skills</i>		
In consultation with advisor, students select and complete quantitative skills courses that are intermediate or advanced courses numbered 300 and above.		
<i>Qualitative Skills</i>		
In consultation with advisor, students select and complete qualitative skills courses that are intermediate or advanced courses numbered 300 and above.		
<i>Combination of Quantitative and Qualitative Skills</i>		
In consultation with advisor, students select and complete quantitative and qualitative skills courses that are intermediate or advanced courses numbered 300 and above.		
Additional Coursework		38
In consultation with advisor, complete coursework to reach the minimum 51 credit requirement. This coursework is chosen to complement a student’s research area.		
Total Credits		51

Geography Seminars

Code	Title	Credits
GEOG 900	Seminar in Geography	1-3
GEOG 901	Seminar in Cultural Geography	2-3
GEOG 918	Seminar in Political Geography	2-3
GEOG 920	Seminar in Physical Geography	1-3
GEOG 930	Seminar in People-Environment Geography	2-3
GEOG 970	Seminar in Geographic Information Science	1-3

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer no more than 9 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

No credits from an undergraduate degree are allowed to transfer toward the degree.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW-Madison

With program approval, students are allowed to transfer no more than 9 credits of graduate-level coursework taken as a UW-Madison University Special student. Coursework earned ten year or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

The Department of Geography expects graduate students to progress through a sequence of benchmarks within prescribed time periods. These benchmarks constitute a reasonable rate of accomplishment for full-time students holding teaching or research appointments. The department recognizes that individual circumstances vary, and not all students progressing toward their academic goals will hit the benchmarks exactly. Thus a student's progress is considered unsatisfactory only after a period of time elapses following an unmet benchmark. A student not making satisfactory progress is placed on probation. For detailed information about these benchmarks and triggers for probationary status, see the department's Criteria for Satisfactory Progress ([\[geography.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Criteria-for-Satisfactory-Progress.pdf\]\(https://geography.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Criteria-for-Satisfactory-Progress.pdf\)\).](https://</p>
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ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

The chair (or co-chair) of a doctoral student's Dissertation Committee is the student's Advisor. This individual must be UW-Madison graduate faculty in Geography or affiliated with Geography. The committee must have at least 4 members, all designated as "readers" (responsible for reading the entire dissertation). The committee must have members from at least 2 University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate programs. Three members must be UW-Madison graduate faculty (or former graduate faculty up to one year after resignation/retirement). At least 2 members must be from UW-Madison Geography or affiliated with UW-Madison Geography. At least one committee member must be from outside the major field of study. The fourth member and any additional members can be UW-Madison graduate faculty (or former graduate faculty up to one year after resignation/retirement) or qualified individuals from within or outside UW-Madison. Inclusion of committee members who are not UW-Madison graduate faculty must be approved by the student's Advisor. Students can add a fifth committee member, who can serve as "non-reader" (not responsible for reading the entire dissertation, able to provide input on specific areas of expertise).

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME LIMITS

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
 - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employee disabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)

- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER

n/a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Articulates research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to theory, knowledge, or practice within geography.
2. Formulates ideas, concepts, designs, and/or techniques beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within geography.
3. Creates research, scholarship, or performance that makes a substantive contribution.
4. Demonstrates breadth within their learning experiences.
5. Advances contributions of geography to society.
6. Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.
7. Fosters ethical and professional conduct.

PEOPLE

PEOPLE FACULTY

Department Chair: John (Jack) Williams

Professors: Ian Baird, Erika Marin-Spiotta, Joseph Mason, Lisa Naughton, Kristopher Olds, Morgan Robertson, Robert Roth, Matthew Turner, John (Jack) Williams, Keith Woodward, A-Xing Zhu

Associate Professors: Song Gao, Asligül Göçmen, Qunying Huang, Jenna Loyd, Sarah Moore, Stephen Young

Assistant Professors: Christian Andresen, Ken Keefover-Ring, Bill Limpisathian, Almita Miranda, Jonathan Nelson