Geography, B.S.

Geography studies the interaction between people and their environments, including the ways in which people, environments, and their interactions vary from place to place across Earth. Because it is concerned with the character of people and their cultures on the one hand, and with the character of Earth’s surface and its resources on the other, it is both a social and a natural science. Being broad and integrative, Geography provides an appropriate foundation for a liberal education. It also provides a base for employment in public or private agencies, both domestic and international, concerned with environmental management, locational analysis, or planning (urban, regional, land use), among other fields.

How to Get In

Exploring the field of geography at UW–Madison is easy. Interested students are strongly encouraged to take introductory courses in the field. The Department of Geography offers four intro courses, each of which surveys one of the four major subareas that comprise the discipline: (1) human geography; (2) people–environment geography; (3) physical geography; (4) and cartography and geographic information science. The four intro classes are:

- GEOG 101 Introduction to Human Geography;
- GEOG/ENVIR ST 120 Introduction to the Earth System;
- GEOG/ENVIR ST 139 Global Environmental Issues; and

Students who intend to declare their major in geography must schedule an appointment with the geography undergraduate advisor.

Requirements

University General Education Requirements

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatetystudytext) section of the Guide.

General Education

- Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits
- Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
- Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits
- Communication Part A & Part B *
- Ethnic Studies *
- Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

College of Letters & Science

Breadth and Degree Requirements: Bachelor of Science (B.S.)

Students pursuing a bachelor of science degree in the College of Letters & Science must complete all of the requirements below. The College of Letters & Science allows this major to be paired with either a bachelor of arts or a bachelor of science curriculum. View a comparison of the degree requirements here. (https://pubs.wisc.edu/home/archives/ug15/images/babs2009.pdf)

Bachelor of Science Degree Requirements

Mathematics

Two (2) 3+ credits of intermediate/advanced level MATH, COMP SCI, STAT
Limit one each: COMP SCI, STAT

Foreign Language

Complete the third unit of a foreign language
Note: A unit is one year of high school work or one semester/term of college work.

L&S Breadth

- Humanities, 12 credits: 6 of the 12 credits must be in literature
- Social Sciences, 12 credits
- Natural Sciences, 12 credits: must include 6 credits in biological science; and must include 6 credits in physical science

Liberal Arts and Science Coursework

108 credits

Depth of Intermediate/Advanced work

60 intermediate or advanced credits

Major

Declare and complete at least one (1) major

Total Credits

120 credits

UW-Madison Experience

30 credits in residence, overall
30 credits in residence after the 86th credit

Minimum

2,000 in all coursework at UW–Madison

GPAs

2,000 in intermediate/advanced coursework at UW–Madison

Non–L&S Students Pursuing an L&S Major

Non–L&S students who have permission from their school/college to pursue an additional major within L&S only need to fulfill the major requirements and do not need to complete the L&S breadth and...
degree requirements above. Please note that the following special
degree programs are not considered majors so are not available to
non-L&S-degree-seeking candidates:

- Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics (Bachelor of Science–Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics)
- Journalism (Bachelor of Arts–Journalism; Bachelor of Science–Journalism)
- Music (Bachelor of Music)
- Social Work (Bachelor of Social Work)

Students must declare one of the major options (p. 3) below, complete Core Requirements common to each option, and also the specific requirements for their declared option.

**CORE REQUIREMENTS**

30 credits the major, to include these core requirements:

**BREADTH**

3 courses, 1 each from these areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Geography (1 course)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 101</td>
<td>Introduction to Human Geography</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 104</td>
<td>Introduction to Human Geography</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 301</td>
<td>Revolutions and Social Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 302</td>
<td>Economic Geography: Locational Behavior</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 304</td>
<td>U.S.-Mexico Borderlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/URB R PL 305</td>
<td>Introduction to the City</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 307</td>
<td>International Migration, Health, and Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 318</td>
<td>Introduction to Geopolitics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 340</td>
<td>World Regions in Global Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 342</td>
<td>Geography of Wisconsin</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 355</td>
<td>Africa, South of the Sahara</td>
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<td>GEOG 358</td>
<td>Human Geography of Southeast Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST/HISTORY 469</td>
<td>The Making of the American Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 501</td>
<td>Space and Place: A Geography of Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/URB R PL 503</td>
<td>Researching the City: Qualitative</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/URB R PL 505</td>
<td>Urban Spatial Patterns and Theories</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 510</td>
<td>Economic Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 518</td>
<td>Power, Place, Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 566</td>
<td>History of Geographic Thought</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST/HISTORY 469</td>
<td>The Making of the American Landscape</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Geography (1 course)</strong></td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST 120</td>
<td>Introduction to the Earth System</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST 127</td>
<td>Physical Systems of the Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/GEOSCI 320</td>
<td>Geomorphology</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 322</td>
<td>Polar Regions and Their Importance in the Global Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST 325</td>
<td>Analysis of the Physical Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 329</td>
<td>Landforms and Landscapes of North America</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/ATM OCN/ENVIR ST 332</td>
<td>Global Warming: Science and Impacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/ATM OCN/ENVIR ST/GEOSCI 335</td>
<td>Climatic Environments of the Past</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG/BOTANY 338</td>
<td>Environmental Biogeography</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 342</td>
<td>Geography of Wisconsin</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEOG 344</td>
<td>Changing Landscapes of the American West</td>
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</table>

**People–Environment (1 course)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST 139</td>
<td>Global Environmental Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG/ENVIR ST 309</td>
<td>People, Land and Food: Comparative Study of Agriculture Systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GEOG/GEOSCI 420  Glacial and Pleistocene Geology
GEOG/GEOSCI 523  Advanced Paleocology: Species Responses to Past Environmental Change
GEOG/GEOSCI 524  Advanced Landform Geography
GEOG/GEOSCI 525  Soil Geomorphology
GEOG/GEOSCI 526  Human Transformations of Earth Surface Processes
GEOG/GEOSCI 527  The Quaternary Period
GEOG/ATM OCN/ENVIR ST 528  Past Climates and Climatic Change

Total Credits 9

CAPSTONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete one of:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 565</td>
<td>Colloquium for Undergraduate Majors</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 681</td>
<td>Senior Honors Thesis &amp; GEOG 682 and Senior Honors Thesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 691</td>
<td>Senior Thesis &amp; GEOG 692 and Senior Thesis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 3-6

MAJOR OPTIONS

Declare one of these major options

View as listView as grid

- GEOGRAPHY: HUMAN GEOGRAPHY (HTTP://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/UNDERGRADUATE/LETTERS-SCIENCE/GEOGRAPHY/GEOGRAPHY-BA/GEOGRAPHY-HUMAN-GEOGRAPHY-BA)

RESIDENCE AND QUALITY OF WORK

- 2.000 GPA in GEOG and major courses
- 2.000 GPA on 15 upper-level credits, taken in residence 1
- 15 credits in GEOG, taken on the UW–Madison campus

1  GEOG courses designated Intermediate/Advanced are upper level in this major.

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

Students may declare Honors in the Geography Major in consultation with the Geography undergraduate advisor.

HONORS IN THE MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

To earn a B.A. or B.S. with Honors in the Major in Geography students must satisfy both the requirements for the major (above) and the following additional requirements:

- Earn a 3.300 University GPA
- Earn a 3.300 GPA in all GEOG courses and major courses
- At least 1 Advanced level major course or 6 credits in major courses numbered 300 and higher, taken for Honors
- Complete a two-semester Senior Honors Thesis (GEOG 681 & GEOG 682) for a total of 6 credits.

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Total Degree  To receive a bachelor’s degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.

Residency  Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. "In residence" means on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.

Quality of Work  Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. A broad spectrum of geographical knowledge and skills, as well as a degree of expertise in a specific sub-field of the discipline (Human, People-Environment, Physical, Cart/GIS).
2. Skills in developing and implementing research plans.
3. Critical reasoning and analytical skills.
4. Communication skills—both written and oral.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Credits</th>
<th>Spring Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Ethnic Studies (e.g., GEOG 305)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Quantitative Reasoning A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication A
Foreign Language  4 Introductory GEOG  3
Biological Science Breadth  3 Foreign Language  4
Introductory GEOG  3-4 Literature Breadth  3

Second Year

Fall
Communication B (e.g., GEOG 101)  4 Humanities Breadth  3
Humanities Breadth  3 Social Science Breadth  3
Major course: Human Geography  3-4 Major course: Physical Geography  3
INTER-LS 210  1 Major course: People-Environment  3
Elective  3 Elective  3

Credits  16  16

Spring

Credits


Third Year

Fall
Social Science Breadth  3 Literature Breadth  3
Natural Science Breadth  3 Major course: Mapping  3-4
Humanities Breadth  3 GEOG 365  3
Intermediate-Level Geography in Subarea  3-4 Electives  6
STAT 301  3

Credits  14  15

Fourth Year

Fall
GEOG 565  3 Advanced-Level Geography Elective in Subarea  3-4
Intermediate-Level Geography Elective in Subarea  3-4 Electives  10
Electives  8

Credits  15  14

Total Credits 120

ADVISING AND CAREERS

ADVISING

Students with questions about the major, courses, and careers are encouraged to contact the geography undergraduate advisor, Joel Gruley, at jgruley@wisc.edu.

CAREERS

Geography is a remarkably interdisciplinary field that spans the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. The types of careers that geography can prepare students for thus reflect this diversity. Geographers work across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, and typically work in the following fields: environmental policy, conservation, and management; geospatial analysis; urban and transportation planning; economic and community development; food security; historic preservation; environmental hazards management; demography and health; refugees and immigration; digital cartography; journalism; international conflict resolution; tourism.

L&S CAREER RESOURCES

SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science helps students leverage the academic skills learned in their major, certificates, and liberal arts degree; explore and try out different career paths; participate in internships; prepare for the job search and/or graduate school applications; and network with professionals in the field (alumni and employers). In short, SuccessWorks helps students in the College of Letters & Science discover themselves, find opportunities, and develop the skills they need for success after graduation.

SuccessWorks can also assist students in career advising, résumé and cover letter writing, networking opportunities, and interview skills, as well as course offerings for undergraduates to begin their career exploration early in their undergraduate career.

Students should set up their profiles in Handshake (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/handshake) to take care of everything they need to explore career events, manage their campus interviews, and apply to jobs and internships from 200,000+ employers around the country.

- SuccessWorks (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu)
- Set up a career advising appointment (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/make-an-appointment)
- INTER-LS 210 L&S Career Development: Taking Initiative (1 credit, targeted to first- and second-year students)—for more information, see Inter-LS 210: Career Development, Taking Initiative (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/inter-ls-210-career-development-taking-initiative)
- INTER-LS 215 Communicating About Careers (3 credits, fulfills Com B General Education Requirement)
- Handshake (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/handshake)
- Learn how we're transforming career preparation: L&S Career Initiative (http://ls.wisc.edu/lsci)

PEOPLE

Professors Burt, Cadwallader, Cronon, Downey, Kaiser, Knox, Mason, Naughton, Olds, Ostergren, Turner, Williams, Zhu

Associate Professors Alatout, Dennis

Assistant Professors Baird, Gibbs, Marin-Spiotta, Ozdogan, Robertson, Roth, Schneider, Woodward, Young