

# UNDERGRADUATE HANDBOOK

## Department of Geography University of Kentucky

(Revised: February 2015)

<http://geography.as.uky.edu/>

*IF*

*If you are interested in the Earth as the home of human beings and how we appraise, occupy, use and misuse it --*

*If you are curious about where things are on the Earth, why they are in those locations, and what are the consequences of their being where they are --*

*If you like to investigate places and areas -- what they are like, how they became that way, and how they function in relation to other places or areas --*

*If you love to observe landscapes -- their composition and character and how people perceive and change them --*

*If you like to pore over maps, or devise new ones, as keys to all of the above --*

*You are a Geographer, born or made!*

*Enter these halls and  
Study! Learn! Enjoy!*

Clarence W. Olmstead  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

## ***INTRODUCTION***

Welcome to Geography. Welcome to the discipline, and to the Department and its people here at the University of Kentucky. As you first read through the materials that follow, you will be setting forth on a journey that will change your life. Geography will broaden your knowledge of the world and its many elements, from physical landscapes and climates, to social, political, and economic systems, to cultures and individual perspectives and behaviors. We hope that Geography will deepen your understanding of these many areas, and especially of the complex interrelations between them. We also hope that Geography will help you appreciate the role that *YOU* have in this world, as an active participant in the human race and as an informed student within a discipline that can certainly “make a difference.”

## ***UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM IN GEOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY***

### *Summary of University and College Requirements*

To complete an undergraduate program a student must satisfy University, College of Arts and Sciences, and Department of Geography requirements. To be awarded a baccalaureate degree (in geography a student can earn a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree) each student must complete 120 semester hours of courses acceptable to the College. At least 90 of these hours must be in Arts and Sciences courses and 39 hours must be in geography (see below). Also, a student must have at least a 2.0 (on a 4 point scale) grade point standing to graduate. Students pursuing a B.A. or a B.S. degree in geography should ensure that they fulfill the UK Core requirements. Suggested programs of study for specific interests or career paths within geography are available from geography faculty.

### *Geography Major Requirements*

Geography has adopted a ‘flexible curriculum’ approach in structuring degree requirements through the adoption of a track system for majors. The curriculum emphasizes development of solid intellectual foundations in the discipline, while selection of a “track” promotes opportunities to tailor coursework around personal interests, areas of expertise, and career aspirations. *Students should work closely with their advisor in planning a program, and should discuss their progress, semester course scheduling, and post-baccalaureate plans with their faculty advisor.*

All majors must complete 18 credit hours in Major Core requirements, which provide the basic thematic, regional, and technical foundations of the discipline.

## ***MAJOR CORE REQUIREMENTS (18 HOURS)***

GEO 130 Earth's Physical Environment  
GEO 172 Human Geography  
GEO 200 Concepts and Methodology in Geography  
GEO 309 Introduction to GIS  
GEO 406 Integrated field studies in Geography  
GEO 499 Senior Research Seminar

## ***METHODS REQUIREMENT (3 HOURS)***

All majors must take at least one methods course from the following list:

GEO 305 Elements of Cartography  
GEO 310 Quantitative techniques in Geography  
GEO 311 Qualitative techniques in Geography  
GEO 409 Advanced GIS

Majors will work with an advisor in selecting additional courses from within geography numbered at the 200 level or above. Recommended core courses are included below for each track. Eligible students may include Independent Work (GEO 560) and Internship experience (GEO 399) for no more than six of these core hours.

Note that the tracks (major concentrations) are *optional*. While students are encouraged to follow a track, it is not required. On degree audits, an option under tracks, called simply "studies in geography" accommodates those students who do not choose a track.

## ***RELATED AREA REQUIREMENTS (18 HOURS)***

### **1. ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY OPTION**

Suggested Courses:

GEO 135 Global Climate Change  
GEO 162 Introduction to Global Environmental Issues  
GEO 231 Environment and Development  
GEO 235 Environmental Management and Policy  
GEO 261 Global Dynamics of Health and Disease  
GEO 321 Land, people and development in Appalachia  
GEO 331 Global Environmental Change  
GEO 334 Environment, Society and Economy of Japan  
GEO 431 Political Ecology  
GEO 530 Biogeography and conservation  
GEO 531 Landscape Ecology

### **2. PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OPTION**

Suggested Courses:

GEO 135 Global Climate Change  
GEO 130 Earth's Physical Landscape  
GEO 230 Weather and Climate  
GEO 235 Environmental Management and Policy  
GEO 351 Physical Landscapes  
GEO 406G Field Studies in Geography  
GEO 451G Fluvial forms and processes  
GEO 530 Biogeography and conservation  
GEO 531 Landscape Ecology

### **3. URBAN GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING OPTION**

Suggested Courses:

GEO220 US Cities  
GEO285 Introduction to Planning  
GEO485G Urban Planning and Sustainability  
GEO235 Environmental Management and Planning  
GEO309 Introduction to GIS  
GEO310 Quantitative Techniques  
GEO 415 Map Interpretation  
GEO422 Urban Geography  
GEO455 Economic Geography  
GEO490G American Landscapes  
GEO544 Human Population Dynamics  
GEO545 Transportation Geography

### **4. GIS FOCUS**

Suggested Courses:

GEO 109 Digital mapping  
GEO 164 iWorlds  
GEO 309 Introduction to GIS  
GEO 409 Advanced GIS  
GEO 549 Workshop in geospatial technologies  
GEO 419 Introduction to remote sensing  
GEO 305 Cartography  
GEO 506 Computer cartography  
GEO 505 Practicum in cartography  
GEO 310 Quantitative methods  
GEO 415 Map interpretation  
GEO 365 Geospatial analysis

### **5. HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OPTION**

Suggested Courses:

GEO 161 Global Inequalities  
GEO 240 Geography and Gender  
GEO 260 Geographies of Development in the Global South

GEO 422 Urban Geography  
GEO 442G Political Geography  
GEO 455 Economic Geography  
GEO 475G Medical Geography  
GEO 490G American Landscapes  
GEO 544 Human Population Dynamics  
GEO 545 Transportation Geography  
GEO 546 Tourism and Recreation Geography

## **6. INTERNATIONAL STUDIES OPTION**

Suggested courses:

GEO 163 Global Conflicts  
GEO 221 Immigrant America  
GEO 222 Cities of the World  
GEO 255 Geography of the Global Economy  
GEO 326 Geography of Europe  
GEO 328 Geography of the Middle East and North Africa  
GEO 329 Geography of the former Soviet Union  
GEO 331 Global Environmental Change  
GEO 334 Environment, Society and Economy of Japan  
GEO 546 Tourism and Recreation Geography

## **7. DESIGN YOUR OWN GEOGRAPHY MAJOR OPTION**

Any Geography courses fulfilling the requirements for the major.

### ***GEOGRAPHY MINOR REQUIREMENTS***

The minor in geography requires a minimum of 18 hours taken within the department. At least 15 hours must be at the 200+ level.

All geography minors should work closely with a departmental advisor in coordinating geography with the chosen major or majors.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATING THE MAJOR/MINOR

Meet with your advisor or the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS). The DUS will explain the program, answer any questions, and direct you to a departmental advisor for discipline-specific advice.

Formally declare the Major/Minor. You can declare a major, or change your major to Geography, in the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Center. It is important to do this as soon as possible so that the department receives regular updates of your transcripts.

Meet with your advisor on a regular basis. They are here to help, and really want to get to know you! Above all, *be prepared* when you meet with your advisor to preregister.

Use the UK Core/College and Departmental Checklists to plan schedules and to keep track of your progress. Careful planning and record keeping will help you avoid many of the problems that keep seniors from graduating on time.

Become involved! The Department offers many opportunities for learning outside of the classroom, from guest lectures and workshops to a wide range of social activities to membership in the department's Society of Geographers, the undergraduate community. There is no better way to enrich your undergraduate experience.

## *UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS*

Following is the list of courses offered by the Department of Geography, with descriptions corresponding to the *University of Kentucky Bulletin* (<https://geography.as.uky.edu/geography-current-course-list>). Students review these descriptions when planning a schedule. Keep in mind, however, that many descriptions are intentionally written to provide flexibility in instruction and learning opportunities. Students should, therefore, contact the instructor if additional information or detail is needed. Students should also be aware that many upper-division courses may be offered only infrequently; an advisor, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, or the Department Chair should be consulted when planning schedules for more than two semesters in advance.

Students with interests in geographic techniques (including GIS and computer cartography) will gain experience with and have access to a range of equipment housed in the Department's Center for Cartography and Geographic Information located in Miller Hall. The Center consists of the Gyula Pauer Cartographic Information Laboratory, the Cartography and Geographic Information Laboratory, and the Geographic Information Systems Laboratory. The department also maintains a GIS teaching laboratory in the Whitehall Classroom Building.

## ***DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES***

Each year the Undergraduate Committee works to enhance communication between undergraduate majors and minors, as well as between students and faculty. Geography majors have a student representative on this committee.

Throughout the academic year the department hosts a number of colloquia and seminars led by members of the department faculty, graduate students, or by well-known visiting scholars from other institutions. You are invited to attend, and participate in, each of these activities. Dates, places, and times are posted regularly on department bulletin boards on the 8th floor of Patterson Office Tower.

Our major social event is the annual Ellen Churchill Semple Day, which is held in the spring semester (usually in April). Ms. Semple, a native of Louisville, Kentucky, is the state's best known geographer. She lived from 1863 to 1932 during which time she published widely and in 1921 was the first woman president of the Association of American Geographers. The day's activities include a presentation by a renowned scholar who is invited to be our guest speaker for an afternoon colloquium. An evening banquet is the culmination of the day's activities, and provides an opportunity to recognize outstanding achievement through the presentation of awards and formal initiation of members to Gamma Theta Upsilon, the international geographical honor society. Since this event showcases the accomplishments of our undergraduates, we strongly encourage all majors to attend.

## ***UNDERGRADUATE SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES***

### ***The Society of Geographers***

This society is an organization for undergraduate majors and minors that was founded in 1983. The purpose of the Society is to provide a social and academic meeting ground for students with common goals and interests. Each year the undergraduates elect officers for the Society, and members generally have monthly meetings and sponsor a number of social activities during the academic year. In the past they have sponsored field trips, guest speakers, spaghetti and pizza dinners, travel to national and regional professional meetings, study groups for exam week, and advising groups that tutor other students enrolled in geography classes. Society membership is an excellent way to develop one's professional interests as well as make friends. All majors are strongly urged to join the group and participate in its organized activities. The Director of Undergraduate Studies, or another designated faculty member, serves as the Society advisor.

### ***Gamma Theta Upsilon***

Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) is an International Geographical Honor Society

that recognizes high academic achievement by geography undergraduates, graduates, and faculty. Established in 1931, this society has grown to include over 200 college and university chapters and over 50,000 members worldwide. The Sigma Chapter of the University of Kentucky was chartered in 1948, and the number of qualified undergraduate initiates has grown dramatically in recent years. Eligible students will be contacted by Dr. Lynn Phillips, who is the Sigma Chapter's Faculty Sponsor.

### ***Professional Organizations.***

Undergraduate Majors are urged to begin developing their professional interests early on. This would include joining an appropriate professional organization such as the Association of American Geographers (AAG), and the Southeastern Division of the Association of American Geographers (SEDAAG). Special student membership rates are available for nearly all professional organizations. For example, the membership cost for SEDAAG is only \$7.00, for which you receive the *Southeastern Geographer*, a regional scholarly research journal, a newsletter, and eligibility to participate in student honors sessions at the annual meeting. Many organizations, such as the AAG, sponsor several student award competitions and also provide career opportunity services at their annual meetings, where students can schedule interviews with potential employers.

### ***Honors and Awards***

Each year the Geography Department recognizes outstanding student achievement through awards given to majors. The awards announcement has become a traditional part of our annual Ellen Churchill Semple Day celebration each spring semester. You will notice that some awards require completion of special projects that therefore involve some planning if you wish to be considered. In addition to those listed below, the College of Arts and Sciences and the University sponsor numerous awards and scholarships. We suggest that you contact the Dean's Office for a list, and consult the section on awards in the University Bulletin.

### ***DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS***

1. The Joseph R. Schwendeman Award (named for the Department's first Chairperson)

*Requirements: Student must be a declared geography major with at least 60 hours of undergraduate course work and 18 hours in geography course credits. This award will be presented to the student with the highest grade point average for overall coursework as determined by Arts and Sciences or Registrar's records. In case of a tie, the award will go the student with the highest GPA in geography courses. The student's name will be engraved on a special plaque that is displayed in the departmental office.*

2. Gyula Pauer Cartography Project Award (named for the Department's first Cartography Lab Director)



*Requirements: Student must be a declared geography major with at least 60 hours of undergraduate course work. Students who wish to be considered for this award should assemble a portfolio of maps prepared in conjunction with any geography class, appropriate internship, or independent study courses they have taken. The quality of work submitted is the principal criterion used in making the award. This means overall quality, indications of technical maturity, and an indication of potential as a professional. This recognition will include a cash award.*

### 3. Ellen Churchill Semple Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Student Research Paper

*Requirements: Student must be a declared geography major with at least 60 hours of undergraduate course work. Research papers prepared for geography courses or presented at regional or national professional meetings are eligible for consideration. The quality of the research problem and the writing and presentation of findings are the principal criteria used in making the award. This includes originality and relevance of the work, and professional potential as indicated by the project. This recognition includes a cash award.*

### 4. Withington Human/Cultural Geography Award (Sponsored by Dr. William A. Withington, Professor Emeritus, University of Kentucky)

*Requirements: This award, which may be awarded at each of the Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral levels, recognizes outstanding student writing in topics following the traditional cultural/behavioral theme in geography. This recognition includes a cash award.*

### 5. Thomas M. Geoghegan Award (Sponsored by the UK Geographical Society in memory of former undergraduate major Tommy Geoghegan)

*Requirements: This award recognizes exceptional dedication and spirit to undergraduate studies in geography. Candidates are in their sophomore or junior year.*

### 6. Raitz Scholarship (Sponsored by Prof. K. Raitz, Professor Emeritus, University of Kentucky)

*Requirements: This prize is awarded by the Department of Geography to support academic merit and diversity among undergraduate students in the Department. This recognition includes a cash award.*

### 7. Departmental Honors (this award is given by Arts & Sciences at the discretion of the department)

*Requirements: The Department will recognize graduating seniors with GPAs of 3.5 or higher, both overall and within the department, for Honors each year.*

## **NONDEPARTMENTAL AWARDS**

### 1. AAG Specialty Group Undergraduate Paper Awards.

*There are 39 formal Specialty Groups within the Association of American Geographers that support interests ranging from Africa and Aging to Transportation and Urban. Many of these Groups sponsor student award competitions each year. Details on these Specialty Group Awards are provided in the AAG Newsletter. Students may also contact a faculty member in the department for additional information.*

### 2. GTU Robert G. Buzzard Scholarship.

*Gamma Theta Upsilon provides this annual scholarship, in the amount of \$500, for superior scholars in geography. The Buzzard Scholarship is for undergraduate seniors who have been accepted to, and will be enrolled in a graduate program in geography. All active GTU members are eligible. Contact Professor John Watkins for information.*

### 3. GTU Benjamin F. Richardson III Scholarship.

*Gamma Theta Upsilon provides this annual scholarship, in the amount of \$500, for undergraduate juniors and seniors having either career or graduate school aspirations in geography. The Richardson Scholarship is based on service to GTU and the local chapter's department and noteworthy academic performance. All active GTU members are eligible. Contact Lynn Phillips for information.*

## **DEPARTMENT FACULTY**

The geography faculty at the University of Kentucky, along with their research and teaching interests and information about their backgrounds and professional activities, are listed at <https://geography.as.uky.edu/faculty>.

This section provides information on how to contact individual faculty members, including their office addresses, e-mails, and telephone numbers.

Students should feel free to contact any geography faculty for professional, academic, and advising advice related to geography.

### **Contact Us:**

Department of Geography  
University of Kentucky  
817 Patterson Office Tower  
Lexington, KY 40506-0027  
Departmental Office (859) 257-2931

*Be sure to visit our department's home page!*  
<https://geography.as.uky.edu/>

## *CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND GEOGRAPHY*

### *Occupational Outlook and Major Career Options*

Examples of jobs that students with bachelor's degrees in geography from the University of Kentucky are working in, or have recently worked in, include:

- Local government land use planning, urban planning, economic development, zoning, and transportation (Lexington, Louisville, Georgetown, Paris, Cynthiana, and other Kentucky cities and counties)
- State transportation planning (Frankfort; Lexington).
- Geospatial science, technology, & applications (Lexington, Louisville, Frankfort, Redlands, CA, Washington, D.C.)
- Sustainable agriculture (Louisville)
- Environmental consulting (Lexington, Louisville, northern Kentucky)
- Geoscience and engineering consulting (Louisville, Lexington, Cincinnati, Chicago)
- Cartography (Louisville, Lexington, Washington, DC)
- Real estate management and development (Lexington, Morehead)
- Military intelligence (Washington, DC, Afghanistan, Germany)
- Area studies/analysis (Washington, DC)
- Refugee resettlement (Cincinnati)
- Energy (coal, oil, gas) development (Houston, Tulsa, Lexington, Richmond VA, Ashland)
- Wildlife & fisheries management (Frankfort)
- Middle and high school social studies and Earth science teaching (numerous locations in Kentucky and adjacent states)
- International trade (Tokyo, Osaka, Chicago, Washington)
- Peace Corps (Bolivia)

For further information on career opportunities in geography go to the homepage of the Association of American Geographers at:  
<http://www.aag.org/>

Recent UK geography graduates have also gone on to do graduate work in geography, planning, environmental science, urban studies, geology, meteorology, soil science, history, biology, medicine, dentistry, health care, and international relations at universities all across the United States.

### *Standing Out in the Job Market*

Employment opportunities for students of geography are truly unlimited. The previous section demonstrates just some of the potential. There *IS* a career for you, regardless of your particular interests in the discipline. You should be aware, however, that few jobs explicitly advertise for “Geography Majors.” Don’t let this reality discourage you. The more you know about geography, and the

better you understand the discipline, the easier it will be to move into a rewarding career.

This section is included to help you prepare for life after college. It offers suggestions on how to improve personal marketability and gain confidence in the marketplace. Employers must sift through scores of resumes in search of appropriate individuals to fill positions. Therefore, some items that follow are suggested as a way to make you “stand out” above the crowd, and to demonstrate areas where geography can provide a tremendous advantage. These are NOT requirements for the major and, depending on your interests, not all suggestions may apply to you.

*GPA is increasingly important.* It wasn't that long ago when having a college diploma provided enough clout to gain employment. Times change. Societies change. And a college education is now almost common-place. A grade point average is now a common first indicator of adequacy in the job market. The moral of this story is that you should not neglect your studies. If you are concerned about your GPA, feel free to talk with your advisor or the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

*Extracurricular activities can be a plus.* A student's GPA is important, but potential employers also look for the ability to balance academics with other organized activities. Participation in departmental committees, the undergraduate Geographical Society, university student organizations, or community affairs can demonstrate attractive abilities to work well in groups and to assume effective leadership positions. Besides the career benefits, such participation allows you to build strong friendships and better enjoy your time at the university.

*International Experience.* Americans are, in general, not well traveled. Students who have any sort of international interests should certainly consider opportunities to study abroad. Besides an immediate impact on job applications, international experiences allow students to live what they have learned through exposure to different physical landscapes, social and political systems, and cultures. Find out how to make this a part of your curriculum by talking with a departmental advisor, and contacting the U.K Office of International Affairs, and Study Abroad Programs and Services (<http://abroad.ad.uky.edu/>), located in Bradley Hall.

*Foreign Language.* If you hope to work in, or be involved with, countries outside of the United States, then foreign language skills may certainly be a plus. Besides the “traditional” languages of French, German, or Spanish, the university offers training in Italian, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic. Contact the U.K International Center (<http://www.uky.edu/international/>) for information on such groups. In addition, students interested in learning more about course offerings in languages other than Spanish should contact the A&S Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures: <http://mcl.as.uky.edu/>

*On-the-Job Experience.* There is no doubt that applied training is beneficial in the

job search. Besides the careful selection of part-time employment while in school, you might also consider internship credit through GEO 399, or through the *U.K. Office of Experiential Education* (<http://www.uky.edu/careercenter/employers/experiential-education-program>). The geography department also has a faculty member designated as internship coordinator. Contact the departmental office to find out who is currently appointed. Also, opportunities often emerge for students to work with faculty members on research projects. Such experiences are especially good for graduate school preparation.

*UK's Career Center* (<http://www.uky.edu/CareerCenter>). The Career Center, located in the Stuckert Building at 408 Rose Street, provides students with many opportunities to enhance their potential employment. On-campus interviews, individual career advising, resume critiques, career fairs, job search workshops, and videotaped practice interviews are some of the services offered.