

GEOGRAPHY (MA, PHD)

The Department of Geography offers programs leading to two graduate degrees: Master of Science (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). (The department also offers a Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems). The M.A. can be earned in course-intensive programs and in programs requiring evidence of meaningful research in the form of a thesis. It provides students with sufficient skills to be successful in private industry, government, and further graduate education. The Ph.D. in Geography provides students with an advanced understanding of theory and techniques required to execute significant research in the contemporary discipline of Geography. The Ph.D. is awarded only after the successful completion of a series of comprehensive examinations and the successful defense of a doctoral dissertation that makes a significant contribution to geographical research. The Ph.D. in geography provides its holders with opportunities for academic, government, and increasingly, private industry research positions.

Requirements

The M.A. and Ph.D. requirements in Geography conform to the Graduate School requirements as outlined in the Academic Regulations section of this catalog. The M.A. can be earned under either Plan A or Plan B. Plan A (thesis option) requires a master's thesis, including a thesis defense, while Plan B (non-thesis option) requires a comprehensive final examination. Specific plans of study for each student's degree objective are determined in consultation with their advisory committees, and in conformance to the Graduate School requirements. Ph.D. plans of study must fulfill a foreign language requirement or have a related area of at least six credits of course work as designated by the student's advisory committee. Each graduate student normally takes GEOG 5000 Research Design, GEOG 5010 Geography Proseminar and GEOG 6000 Themes in Geographic Thought in the first year of study. Students can expect their programs to take two years for the M.A. and three to five years for the Ph.D., depending upon preparation and interests.