

Integrated Baccalaureate and Master's Degree in Geography



The integrated degree program in Geography provides an opportunity for undergraduate Geography majors to complete a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography/GIS and a Master of Arts degree in Geography in five years. In addition to earning both degrees in an accelerated timeframe, the integrated program includes additional opportunities to participate in a variety of experiential education activities such as a master's thesis, applied project or professional plan.

Admission Requirements

- The applicant should apply to the Western Illinois University School of Graduate Studies for admission to an integrated program in Geography.
- The applicant must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 and a major GPA of 3.25, or a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 with a minimum 3.3 GPA in the last 30 SH taken at WIU.
- The applicant should provide a personal statement of purpose and request three letters of recommendation if applying for a graduate assistantship.
- The GRE is highly recommended if applying for a graduate assistantship, otherwise it is not required.
- Official transcripts will be obtained from the applicant's WIU record by the School of Graduate Studies.

Degree Requirements

The integrated degree program offers three degree options: (1) thesis, (2) applied project, or (3) professional plan. The thesis option (3 SH) seeks to answer a question relevant to an area of geographic inquiry. The applied project option (3 SH) is intended for students whose career aspirations are best served by gaining practical experience in the design and solution of a geographical or planning problem and presentation of the results. Both options require a research proposal to be presented and the completed thesis/applied project to be defended to faculty and students. The professional plan requires students to complete an internship (3 SH) and extended courses. The minimum required hours are 32 to 35 SH.

- The thesis option consists of 3 SH of thesis research (GEOG 698) and 20 SH of directed electives.
- The applied project consists of 3 SH of practical experience (GEOG 697) and 20 SH of directed electives.
- The professional plan consists of 3 SH of internship (GEOG 596 or 597) and 23 SH of directed electives.

Undergraduate students will be required to complete 120 SH of coursework. As part of the integrated master's degree program, students may take up to 9 SH as "bridge" courses, which count toward both the bachelor's and master's degrees. A student must be a senior and accepted into the integrated program before taking bridge courses.

Career Opportunities

Geography and GIScience students have marketable skills and broad perspectives on the environment and society that enable them to pursue a wide variety of career paths. A growing number of industries and organizations are turning to geography and GIScience to predict flood paths, analyze crop planting sites, identify locations for retail expansion and much more. As a result the employment outlook for geographers—especially those with training in GIS, remote sensing and other geospatial technologies—is positive. Potential career paths include:

- Digital Cartography
- Disaster Response
- Natural Resource Management
- Urban Planning
- International Business
- Transportation, Land Use and Tourism Planning

Contact Information

Questions about the program:

Department of Geography,
Geographic Information Science
and Meteorology
Graduate Coordinator
(309) 298-1648
geography@wiu.edu
wiu.edu/cas/geography

General admission questions:

School of Graduate Studies
(309) 298-1806 or (877) WIU GRAD
Grad-Office@wiu.edu
wiu.edu/grad

Higher Values in Higher Education

Academic Excellence
Educational Opportunity
Personal Growth
Social Responsibility



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- Economic Development
- Market Research
- Public Health Planning
- Historic Preservation
- Environmental Consulting
- Commercial Real Estate
- Public Education

Integrated Degree Course Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of 120 SH of credits to meet the BS degree requirements, including the following:

University General Education Requirements 55 SH

Undergraduate Core Courses 12 SH
 GEOG 202, 301, 405†, and 409

Options of Study (select A or B)

A. General Geography

1. Choose one of the following: METR 120 OR GEOG 121..... 4 SH
2. Choose one of the following: GEOG 100# OR 110# 3 SH
3. Choose three courses (200 level and above) from the Physical group and two courses from the Human group or choose three courses (200 level and above) from the Human group and two courses from the Physical group 15 SH
4. Choose one from the Geospatial group 3 SH
5. Choose three of the following: GEOG 341, 430, 440, 445, 458, 466, 497; GEOL 380, 420; METR 220, 300, 337, 432
6. Any Minor..... 16 SH
7. Open Electives 3 SH

B. Geospatial Science

1. Complete the following: GEOG 309, 402, 403, 406, 407 or 408, 410 18 SH
2. Choose three of the following: CS 114#, CS 214#; GEOG 209, 341, 407 or 408 430, 440, 445, 466, 497, 499 9 SH
3. Any Minor..... 16 SH
4. Open Electives 10 SH

Graduate Core Courses 9 SH
 GEOG 505 Research Methods I 3 SH
 GEOG 605 Research Methods II 3 SH
 One graduate seminar (GEOG 610, 630, 650) 3 SH

Select one of the following exit options 23-26 SH

A. Thesis

GEOG 698 Thesis 3 SH
 Directed Electives (includes up to 9 SH of bridge courses)..... 20 SH

B. Applied Project

GEOG 697 Applied Project 3 SH
 Directed Electives (includes up to 9 SH of bridge courses)..... 20 SH

C. Professional Plan

Internship (GEOG 596 or 597)..... 3 SH
 Directed Electives (includes up to 9 SH of bridge courses)..... 23 SH

Total Program 32-35 SH



Up to 9 SH of the following bridge undergraduate/graduate courses can be counted toward the 32-35 SH requirements: GEOG 403G Advanced Remote Sensing (3), GEOG 406G Spatial Statistics in GIS (3), GEOG 408G Environmental Geographic Information Science (3), GEOG 409G Thematic Geographic Information Science (3), GEOG 425G Satellite and Radar Meteorology (3), GEOG 426G (cross-listed with BIOL 426G) Conservation and Management of Natural Resources (3), GEOG 443G Population Geography (3), GEOG 445G Urban Geography (3), GEOG 459G (cross-listed with BIOL 459G) Biogeography (3), GEOG 466G World Regions (Africa-cross-listed with AAS 466G) (3).