Geography, MA

Learning Outcomes

Thesis Program

Students who successfully complete the MA program with a thesis in geography will demonstrate:

- both broad knowledge of the field of geography and deep knowledge in their area of research concentration;
- an ability to communicate their research concisely and effectively to both general and specialist audiences in written and verbal formats;
- an ability to formulate research questions; select, design, and apply appropriate research methods (e.g., testable hypotheses, data collection, management, analytical techniques); and utilize critical thinking skills to build knowledge, theory, and/or practice in their area of research concentration;
- competence in teaching geography, environmental, or sustainability-related courses; and
- understanding of and an ability to operate under professional standards of ethical conduct.

Requirements

The Master of Arts in geography without thesis is not currently accepting new applicants.

The Master of Arts (MA) in geography requires a minimum of 30 s.h. of graduate credit with thesis and 32 s.h. of graduate credit without thesis. The MA is designed to be completed in four semesters.

Students take SEES:7000 School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium (1 s.h.) each semester they are in residence.

Required Courses

The following courses are typically completed in the first year of the program.

Course #	Title	Hours
SEES:5010	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Foundations	2
SEES:5020	Research Resources	1
SEES:7270	Orientation, Scholarly Integrity, and Responsible Conduct of Research	1
CLAS:5100/ RHET:5100	Practicum: College Teaching and Professional Development for Teaching Assistants	1

Additional Coursework

Students complete 15 s.h. in additional coursework numbered 3000 or above chosen in consultation with their advisor. Selected courses should ensure that the student has a broad understanding of their field, build basic competence in the use of research techniques, and build depth of knowledge in an area of specialization.

Students complete up to 9 s.h. of additional research or thesis work in SEES:7990 Graduate Research or SEES:7999 Graduate Thesis.

Students demonstrate competence by completing appropriate coursework and completing and defending an MA thesis (for thesis students) or completing a portfolio of finished work and having it reviewed (students completing the program without thesis).

Graduate Education

Graduate education prepares students with advanced knowledge and skills in specialized fields. At the University of Iowa, the Graduate College advocates for student-centered graduate education and supports equitable application of rules and policies across graduate programs.

Academics

University of Iowa graduate credentials are regulated by policies and requirements found in the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations. This includes minimum grade-point average (GPA) requirements for academic standing and degree conferral. The Graduate College sets the minimum requirement. Individual graduate programs may establish higher GPA requirements.

Admissions

Graduate student applicants must meet admission requirements for both the Graduate College and the program to which they have applied. University of Iowa graduate admission requirements are published by the Graduate College and on the Graduate Admissions website.

Financial Support

Graduate students might be eligible for financial support. Several contingencies apply, including degree program and award type, satisfactory progress toward degree, satisfactory completion of all duties related to an appointment, and availability of funding. Graduate students should inquire directly with their program for more information about funding availability. The Graduate Student Employment Standards govern the employment relationship between the University of Iowa and all graduate teaching and research assistants in all matters except wages, which are covered by an existing collective bargaining agreement or the conditions of an applicable federal grant.

Admission

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; see the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website. Application information can be found on the School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability website.

A bachelor's degree with a major in geography is not required, but applicants must have an undergraduate background relevant to the field. Strength in social science, environmental science, or geographic information science and interest in exploring the spatial perspectives that characterize modern geography are important in admission decisions.

Career Advancement

Graduates hold a wide variety of positions with colleges and universities, private research organizations, and business

and government and frequently go on to complete doctoral studies. The degree also provides a solid background for professions including law, health care, environmental engineering, and business.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.