

Geography, PhD

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete the geography doctoral program in the School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability 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 Doctor of Philosophy in geography requires 72 s.h. of graduate credit and is designed to be completed in four or five years. Students must maintain a Graduate College program grade-point average of at least 3.00.

All PhD students take the following courses. They take SEES:7000 School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium each semester they are in residence.

Course #	Title	Hours
SEES:5010	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Foundations	3
SEES:5050	Research and Writing	3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium (taken each semester)	1

Students complete a set of research milestones, including a research paper, an area of concentration bibliography, and a written qualifying examination in the discipline. With the approval of the dissertation advisor, each student submits a dissertation proposal to the dissertation committee for critical comments, oral questioning, and approval. Once the dissertation is completed, an oral defense of the dissertation is held.

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 previous degree in geography is not required, but applicants must have an academic background relevant to the field. Strength in social science, environmental science, geographic information science, or another relevant field and interest in

exploring the spatial perspectives that characterize modern geography are important in admission decisions.

Career Advancement

The Doctor of Philosophy program prepares students to carry on creative and productive research in geography and related fields. University of Iowa graduates hold positions in college and university faculties, private research organizations, and business and government.

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

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

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Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
72 s.h. must be graduate level coursework; graduate transfer credits allowed upon approval. More information is included in the General Catalog and on department website. ^a		
Hours		0
First Year		
Fall		
SEES:5010	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Foundations	3
Geography course ^b		3
Elective course ^c		3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		10
Spring		
SEES:5050	Research and Writing	3
Geography course ^b		3
Elective course ^c		3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		10
Second Year		
Fall		
Elective course ^c		3
Elective course ^c		3
Elective course ^c		3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		10
Spring		
Elective course ^c		3
Elective course ^c		3

Elective course ^c		3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		10

Third Year**Fall**

Qualifying Exam ^e		
Elective course ^c		3
Elective course ^c		3
Geography research seminar ^f		3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		10

Spring

Oral Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation Prospectus ^g		
Elective course ^c		3
Elective course ^c		3
Geography research seminar ^f		3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		10

Fourth Year**Fall**

Elective course ^c		1
SEES:7999	Graduate Thesis	3
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Hours		5

Spring

SEES:7999	Graduate Thesis	6
SEES:7000	School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability Research Colloquium ^d	1
Exam: Doctoral Final Exam ^h		
Hours		7
Total Hours		72

a Students must complete specific requirements in the University of Iowa Graduate College after program admission. Refer to the Graduate College website and the Manual of Rules and Regulations for more information.

b Must be numbered SEES:5XXX or above.

c Work with faculty advisor to determine appropriate elective coursework and sequence.

d Required every semester.

e Written exam typically taken by the end of the fifth semester; refer to the Graduate Handbook for specifics.

f Choose from courses numbered 6500 through 6900.

g Typically completed by the end of the sixth semester.

h Dissertation defense.