

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

2008-09

MISSION

Geography is one of the few disciplines that comfortably bridge the social sciences, biophysical sciences and humanities. The Bachelor of Arts program offers an international and integrative perspective on the relations among social, political, economic, and biophysical processes that affect interconnections between people, environments and places. The Geography major offers two options: (1) A General Geography major that integrates human geography, physical geography, regional geography and geospatial techniques and (2) an Applied Geography concentration that provides students with an array of technical and analytical skills that have practical application for examining key issues facing society and the environment. Geography prepares students for a variety of careers and/or advanced study by educating them about Earth patterns and processes, their social and economic context and their cultural meaning. Geographers work in a variety of fields including urban and regional planning, climatology, transportation, resource management, marketing, natural hazards, tourism, international business, government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Foster understanding of human society, the natural environment, and the interdependence between the two.
- Provide basic familiarity with complex concepts, theories and research methods fundamental to geographic study.
- Stimulate awareness of geographical perspectives through analysis of spatial patterns and processes that reflect and inform social, environmental, political, economic, and cultural practices.
- Provide students opportunities to employ observational and analytical skills to the study of space, place, and environment on scales from the local to the global.
- Stimulate awareness of critical human and environmental issues facing the world today, including contemporary debates on globalization and global change.
- Provide students with field experiences in a variety of natural and socio-cultural environments.
- Provide students with opportunities to develop an in-depth understanding of other countries and people and an appreciation of the complexity and interrelationship of today's global society.
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STUDENT LEARNING GOALS/OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate understanding of the interrelationships and interactions between culture and the environment.

- Demonstrate general awareness of the theories and philosophies underlying geographical inquiry.
- Demonstrate understanding of the natural and cultural processes that affect society and the environment in specific regions and locales.
- Acquire awareness of the diversity of peoples, places, and environments within a specific region or around the world.
- Demonstrate knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies that may be applied to help our communities, monitor natural areas, plan sensible urban developments, and observe human trends.
- Acquire skills in geographic information science and understand the interpretive capacity of geospatial technologies, and their place in society.