GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Graduate Program Head: Anthony C. Robinson
Program Code: GIS
Campus(es): World Campus (M.G.I.S.)
Degrees Conferred: Master of Geographic Information Systems (M.G.I.S.)
The Graduate Faculty: View (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/?searchType=fac&prog=GIS)

The Master of Geographic Information Systems (M.G.I.S.) degree is awarded to students who demonstrate mastery of the technical competencies and leadership skills required to design, manage, and use geographic information technologies in a wide range of professional fields.

Admission Requirements
Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-admissions/how-to-apply/). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions Policies (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/).

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students/) for more information.

Additional requirements imposed by the Department of Geography include:

- Statement of professional experience and goals. A résumé should be attached as a supplement, but the statement itself should be an essay (two to three pages) that demonstrates the applicant’s written communication skills and clarifies the applicant’s objectives in completing the degree program;
- Two letters of recommendation that attest to the applicant’s readiness for graduate study;
- Official transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended (http://www.gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply/new-applicants/requirements-for-graduate-admission/), including the institution that conferred the applicant’s baccalaureate degree (and any graduate degrees, if applicable);
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score, if applicable;
- Nonrefundable application fee.

Applications will be evaluated by the M.G.I.S. Admissions Committee based on the applicants’ technical qualifications for the program relative to their previous educational experience, academic interests, and English Language proficiency. In general, successful applicants are expected to have earned an undergraduate grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Applicants with a marginal record are encouraged to first complete a related Graduate Certificate before applying for admission to the M.G.I.S. program. Exemplary performance in the Graduate Certificate will be taken into consideration for possible admission into the M.G.I.S. program, but completion of a certificate does not imply or guarantee admission into a degree program.

Credits earned at other institutions but not used to earn a degree may be applied toward the requirements for a graduate degree, subject to restrictions outlined in GCAC-309 Transfer Credit. (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/transfer-credit/)

Degree Requirements
Master of Geographic Information Systems (M.G.I.S.)
Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-700 Professional Degree Policies (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/).

Students earn the M.G.I.S. degree by successfully completing 33 credits of course work, including a supervised culminating project. Course requirements include a minimum of 18 credits at the 500 or 800 level, with at least 6 credits at the 500 level.

The culminating experience for the degree is an independent project completed while enrolled in GEOG 870. The independent project completed in GEOG 870 demonstrates the student’s ability to apply advanced knowledge and skills related to geographic information systems in a way that makes a substantial contribution to their professional work. The culminating experience will include a formal presentation and scholarly paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 482</td>
<td>Making Maps That Matter With GIS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or GEOG 581</td>
<td>Spatial Data Science Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 483</td>
<td>Problem-Solving with GIS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 484</td>
<td>GIS Database Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 583</td>
<td>Geospatial System Analysis and Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 871</td>
<td>Geospatial Technology Project Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 586</td>
<td>Geographical Information Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 870</td>
<td>Capstone in Geographic Information Systems</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In lieu of specified prescribed and elective courses, M.G.I.S. students may elect to substitute those for courses that comprise an option. There are two option choices: Geospatial Intelligence Option (15 credits) and Geodesign Option (12 credits).

Geospatial Intelligence Option
M.G.I.S. students who choose to complete the Geospatial Intelligence Option may substitute the 15 credits that comprise the option for 15 credits of prescribed and elective courses (including GEOG 482 or GEOG 864, GEOG 483, and GEOG 484). This option is designed for current or aspiring practitioners in government agencies, businesses, and non-governmental organizations that rely on insights produced through skillful, knowledgeable, and conscientious analysis of diverse georeferenced data to plan for emergencies, to coordinate responses to natural and human induced disasters, to enforce the law, and to plan and conduct military operations.
A student is pursuing graduate education policies (GCAC-700 Professional Degree Policies) and the default requirements for a graduate minor are stated in the Graduate Council policies listed under the title program. The A graduate minor is available in any approved graduate major or dual-major.  

**Minor**

A graduate minor is available in any approved graduate major or dual-major title program. The default requirements for a graduate minor are stated in Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-600-minor-research-doctorate/) and GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-600-minor-research-masters/), depending on the type of degree the student is pursuing:  

- GCAC-611 Minor - Research Doctorate (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-611-minor-research-doctorate/)
- GCAC-641 Minor - Research Master’s (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/gcac-641-minor-research-masters/)
- GCAC-709 Minor - Professional Doctorate (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-700/gcac-709-professional-doctoral-minor/)
- GCAC-741 Minor - Professional Master’s (https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-700/gcac-741-masters-minor-professional/)  

**Student Aid**

World Campus students in graduate degree programs may be eligible for financial aid. Refer to the Tuition and Financial Aid section (https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/tuition-and-financial-aid/) of the World Campus website for more information.  

**Courses**

Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.  

Geography (GEOG) Course List (https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/geog/)  

**Learning Outcomes**

1. **KNOW:** Graduates will demonstrate the technical and analytical competencies required to effectively design, manage, and apply geographic information technologies to create solutions to challenges in a wide range of professional domains.
2. **APPLY/CREATE:** Graduates will apply geographic information technologies using appropriate data, accepted analytical methods, and evaluation criteria to develop solutions for a variety of complex scenarios.
3. **COMMUNICATE:** Graduates will communicate technical knowledge, including ideas, designs, data analysis, findings, or decision justification in appropriate written and oral presentation formats.
4. **THINK:** Graduates will demonstrate proficiency of geospatial information technology to define problems, create and implementation analytical solutions to address challenges within a variety of domains.
5. **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:** Graduates will demonstrate professional standards and ethical practices, engage in professional and community-based service, and develop the skills required to lead geospatial technology organizations.
Contact

Campus: World Campus
Graduate Program Head: Anthony C Robinson
Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Professor-in-Charge (PIC): Anthony C Robinson

Program Contact: JULENE A. SANTIAGO
John A. Dutton e-Education Institute
2217 EES
University Park PA 16802
jas9616@psu.edu
(814) 865-2557

Program Website: View (https://gis.e-education.psu.edu/mgis/)