

What about a major in...?

Geography (B.A.)

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

CLA COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

What is Geography?

Geography describes and explains the past, present, and future locations and spatial patterns of humans and their settlements, cultural and economic traits, and natural environment and resources. The language of maps is a distinctive language of geography, and an ability to use and interpret maps is fundamental to the study and practice of the discipline. Geography offers students an integrative perspective on the relations among social, political, economic, and physical phenomena in space and place.

The B.A. provides students with a broad background in the discipline with emphasis on one of four tracks: city systems; regional analysis and development; environmental systems; and geographic information systems.

City Systems Track

The City Systems track examines urban phenomena on two scales. In cities as systems, students learn about the internal structure of cities, including their morphology, land-use patterns, social geography, and meaning. In systems of cities, the interconnections among cities at regional, national, and global scales are emphasized. The track examines cities and city systems in diverse settings—North American cities, European cities, cities in the developing world—and from different perspectives—historical, social, political, economic, and other approaches.

Regional Analysis and Development Track

In the Regional Analysis and Development track, students learn about different ways of life and conceptions of development or well-being of people in different places. They also learn about the connectedness of societal and environmental processes from local to global levels.

Environmental Systems Track

The Environmental Systems track examines the natural environments and resources that sustain human life and activity. Students explore the local and global patterns of climate, soils, vegetation, and surface land form; changes over time, both naturally occurring and caused by humans, in the natural environment; and ways of analyzing and predicting both human-caused and naturally occurring environmental change.

Geographic Information Systems

The Geographic Information, Analysis, and Representation track is concerned with all aspects of geographical information, including collection, storage, manipulation, analysis, and visualization. This track encompasses geographical information science (GIS), cartography, remote sensing, spatial analysis, and numerical modeling.

What are the major requirements?

Go to www.catalogs.umn.edu/programs.html and select “Undergraduate majors.”

For more information:

About the Geography major:

Undergraduate Advising
423 Social Science Building
(612) 625-0133

<http://www.geog.umn.edu/advisor@socsci.umn.edu>

About CLA requirements, graduation, and other information about majors:

CLA Social Sciences Student Community

575 Heller Hall

(612) 626-7714

<http://socsci.class.umn.edu/>

or

CLA Martin Luther King, Jr. Program

19 Johnston Hall

(612) 625-2300

<http://www.class.umn.edu/mlk/mlk@class.cla.umn.edu>

About careers, internships, and community learning opportunities in this major and others:

Career and Community

Learning Center

135 Johnston Hall

(612) 624-7577

www.cclc.umn.edu/

cclc@class.cla.umn.edu

About graduation with honors:

CLA Honors Division

20 Nicholson

(612) 624-5522

www.honors.class.umn.edu/

honors@class.cla.umn.edu

How do I declare a Geography major?

You will be required to declare a major by the time you have completed 60 credits.

1. Talk with someone from the department: an adviser, a professor, or a teaching assistant, to learn more about the major and its requirements.
2. When you decide upon a Geography major, meet with the undergraduate adviser to complete a Major Program Plan.
3. Bring a copy of the form or plan to your CLA student community.
4. If you decide to change your major, contact your CLA student community to learn more about your new major's declaration process.

What can I do with a major in Geography?

Skills

Geography majors develop skills that are applicable to a wide variety of careers.

These skills include:

- Ability to produce and interpret maps
- Critical thinking and analytical skills
- Ability to formulate clear and persuasive messages
- Listening, clarifying, questioning and responding skills
- Ability to work well with diverse groups
- Ability to analyze and present data

Employment

Common areas of employment for this major include but are not limited to:

- Physical/Environmental—water/natural resources planning, environmental impact, terrain/land use planning, conservation
- Human—economic development, policy research, housing, program development, public health, urban and regional planning, historical preservation
- Geographic Information Systems—mapping, plotting, data analysis and presentation
- Business—marketing, human resources development, sales, consulting, land development
- Nonprofit—fundraising, programming, management, human rights, public policy analysis, city planning
- Education—teaching, research, student affairs, adult education, public interest education, research

Remember!

You have not declared a major until you have:

- completed a Major Program form with your major adviser,
- filed a copy with the major department,
- and filed a copy with your CLA student community.

Don't forget: keep a copy for yourself!