

Geography, Ph.D.

Doctor of Philosophy

The Doctoral Program in Geography at West Virginia University provides students with cutting edge training in the history and theory of geography, experience with advanced geographic research methodologies and specialized mentoring from faculty experts across three sub-disciplinary fields (Human Geography; Environmental Geography; Geographic Information Science). To earn a Ph.D. in Geography at WVU students must complete 28 credit hours of graduate courses (based upon the curriculum described below), form a committee of graduate faculty to supervise their study, pass a comprehensive exam, write and defend a dissertation research proposal, and finally, write and defend a dissertation.

Degree Requirements

- **Credit Hours:** Coursework will be selected based on the research area of each student, providing an individualized plan of study appropriate to the field of Human Geography, Environmental Geography, or Geographic Information Science. Students are required to complete a minimum number of 28 graduate credit hours in Geography at the 400 level or above. Coursework substitutions may be approved as appropriate by a student's graduate committee. No more than 6 credit hours of 400-level courses may be counted towards the degree. Students may petition their committee to transfer up to 9 credit hours from another program, including other graduate programs at WVU.
- **Grade Point Average:** Students must earn a minimum GPA of 3.0 overall, and 3.0 in coursework applied to their graduate program.
- **Comprehensive Examinations:** The student is required to pass an oral and three written comprehensive examinations no later than the fourth semester. The student will be examined on two specialty areas and a third area closely related to the proposed dissertation research topic.
- **Dissertation Proposal/Defense:** Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination and no later than the end of the fifth semester, the student will be expected to defend a dissertation research proposal. The award of the Ph.D. is granted upon the successful defense of the dissertation itself.
- **Additional Requirements:** The academic progress of every Ph.D. student is reviewed each year. Students must submit a self-evaluation signed by their advisor by January 15. The Graduate Committee will conduct its annual review of students in February and communicate with students in or before March. Waivers to the Ph.D. deadlines, timing requirements, and other rules may be requested from the Graduate Director. Waivers are only given under extraordinary circumstances.
- **Benchmarks:** For further information, go to the Geography Degree Progress tab (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/eberlycollegeofartsandsciences/geologyandgeography/#degreeprogress>).

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
CORE COURSES		10
GEOG 600	Geography Research Colloquium	
GEOG 601	Geographic Thought	
GEOG 602	Geographic Research-Design	
GEOGRAPHY ELECTIVES *		6
Two GEOG courses at the 500 level or above		
METHODS COURSE		3
Select one course from the following list:		
GEOG 550	Geographic Information Science	
GEOG 603	Qualitative Research in Geography	
GEOG 651	Geographic Information Science: Technical Issues	
GEOG 654	Environmental Geographic Information Systems Modeling	
GEOG 655	Remote Sensing Principles	
GEOG 701	Quantitative Spatial Analysis	
SEMINAR COURSE		3
Select one course from the following list:		
GEOG 612	Gender, Society and Space	
GEOG 640	Geopolitical Perspectives	
GEOG 650	Political Ecology Seminar	
GEOG 696	Graduate Seminar	
GEOG 796	Graduate Seminar	
ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK		6

In consultation with graduate committee, select an additional 6 credit hours of graduate level coursework**

Total Hours

28

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Excluding GEOG 780 (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/search/?P=GEOG%20780>) or GEOG 797 (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/search/?P=GEOG%20797>).

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Additional coursework may include Geography courses at the graduate level or, with approval from the student's graduate committee, may include graduate level coursework from related disciplines. Additional coursework also excludes GEOG 780 or GEOG 797.

Note: Students are expected to be involved in research throughout their graduate career and enrollment in in GEOG 797 should reflect this activity. Most students complete 50 credit hours of research.

Major Learning Outcomes

GEOGRAPHY

The graduate program in Geography at West Virginia University trains students at the highest level to assume leadership roles in research, teaching, and applied work in Human Geography, Environmental Geography, and Geographic Information Science.

The Geography Graduate Committee regularly reviews the structure and content of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs to provide the best possible education to students in order to meet the needs for highly trained individuals in Human Geography, Environmental Geography, and Geographic Information Science.

PH.D. PROGRAM

Students obtaining a doctorate in geography will be able to:

- Communicate geographical concepts orally and in writing
- Apply research skills to analyze geographical questions
- Propose, produce and defend original research of publishable quality
- Explain geographic principles as they relate to their area of research
- Effectively communicate the state of knowledge in their research area
- Identify research questions in geography
- Critique and assess peer-reviewed literature