Geography is the science of people and the environment. Things like urbanization, migration and climate change are ways in which people are altering their environments everyday. This discipline encourages students to take a holistic view of the world and their place in it. Geography focuses on the ways in which neighborhoods, cities, and nations can be made more sustainable for the future.

Why UMD

- Exciting and Innovative Faculty: Department faculty have ongoing research projects all over the world.
- Lots of opportunities to use classroom knowledge in the community – From internships to class speakers students will have a lot of chances to meet members of the local community
- Hands on Classes – Students learn to analyze soil, map maps, and create presentations, not just sit and take notes
- Students doing interesting work – In class projects students are doing innovative and fascinating research

Acquired Skills

- Knowledge about the Environment – learn about the ecological and social systems that shape our world.
- Research Skills – Learn how to map, analyze, and understand the world around you.
- Problem Solving Skills – Students learn to address real-world problems
- Identify Solutions – Students go beyond identifying problems, and work with community members to implement solutions to problems.

Career Possibilities

Geographers work in every type of career imaginable. The discipline trains people to analyze problems and work with other people to develop innovative solutions. Graduates find work in careers such as natural resources management, outdoor education, business, the non-profit sector, cartography and mapping, and in local government.

Scholarships

- Matti Kaups Scholarship Award
- Emma Goldman Scholarship in Geography
- Carlson/Amys Family Scholarship

Student Clubs

Gamma Theta Upsilon

Faculty Highlights

Ryan Bergstrom: My research is primarily focused on the human dimensions of global change, with a focus on rural areas of the American West, including the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. I am particularly interested in understanding how natural resource-dependent communities impact their local environment and how these impacts facilitate or hinder a transition towards sustainability. As a human-environment geographer I straddle the worlds of physical and cultural geography,
and use geospatial sciences to better understand the relationship between humans and the natural world. Because of my passion for both realms of geography (physical and cultural), I teach a wide variety of courses including Physical Geography, Weather and Climate, Climatology, Environmental Conservation, Soil Science, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, Sustainability Science, Geography of Tourism, World Regional Geography, and Recreation and Natural Resource Extraction, as well as numerous courses in Geographic Information Science.

Requirements

We seek students who are creative, inquisitive, and ambitious and, most importantly, interested in the world around. Many of our students enjoy spending time in the outdoors, others are interested in cities and urban environments. What they have in common is an interest in thinking about how humans affect environments and how choices today affect future generations. All of our students do internships at local organizations, from urban planning agencies to environmental firms. We stress the real-world application of skills.

What you can do with this degree?

Geography is focused on how humans interact with the environment, and how to solve problems created by these relationships. As climate change reshapes what environments look like all over the world, the skills we teach are becoming more and more important. Therefore students use their skills in all sorts of different fields from government to private business and from the non-profit sector to the national parks system.

Graduate Report

Recent UMD Graduates Job Placement Data & Employers

Here’s a sampling of positions Geography B.A. grads have attained six months to one year after graduation.

• GIS Intern - AmeriCorps, National Park Service, Atlanta, GA

• AmeriCorps, REAP Food Group, Farm to School Program, Madison, WI
• Outdoor Education Instructor - Pali Institute, Running Springs, CA

For more data see the Geography B.A. Graduate Follow-Up Report. For ideas about Geography B.A. and other majors visit Career & Internship Services.