



## GRADUATE STUDIES FACT SHEET

### GEOGRAPHY

#### THE M.A. IN GEOGRAPHY

The master of arts in geography develops skills and expertise for spatial problem solving in areas such as land-use planning and management, conservation of resources, demographic change, and location of commerce and industry. It also serves as preparation for entrance into Ph.D. programs in geography, planning, and environmental science/sustainability. There is a strong emphasis on research methodology and in the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology. A thesis is recommended but optional.

Students may focus the M.A. in one of several guided directions: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related spatial analysis applications, urban and regional planning, and environmental and sustainability analysis. Supporting courses in other departments complement offerings in each of these areas. Graduate internships are available, as are a limited number of graduate assistantships.

Graduates of the program secure employment as planners, spatial analysts, travel consultants, foresters, GIS technicians, project directors, transportation specialists, environmental consultants, demographers, township directors, and geospatial technology professionals.

#### THE CURRICULUM

The M.A. degree consists of 33 semester hours including an optional thesis which can be taken for three or six credits. Other required courses include the following:

- GEO 503 Seminar in Modern Geography
- GEO 509 Quantitative Methods
- GEO 534 Geographic Information Systems
- GEO 585 Geographic Field Methods

For thesis:

GEO 610 Thesis

For nonthesis:

GEO 584 Applications of Geographic Information Systems

GEO 600 Research Report

The other four or five courses usually are selected from the following geography courses, but may include courses offered by other departments:

GEO 502 Topical Seminar

GEO 505 Planning Design

GEO 507 Internet Applications of GIS

GEO 521 Suburbanization and Land Development

GEO 524 Population Processes

GEO 525 Urban and Regional Planning

GEO 526 Metropolitan Systems and Problems

GEO 527 Planning Law and Organization

GEO 531 Transportation Planning

GEO 534 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

GEO 536 Environmental Planning

GEO 538 Environmental Modeling with GIS

GEO 554 Geography and Planning of Housing

GEO 577 Geodatabases

GEO 584 Applications of Geographic Information Systems

GEO 615 Internship

#### Certificate in Urban and Regional Planning

The Department of Geography and Planning offers an 18-credit certificate in urban and regional planning. There is

one required course, GEO 525 Urban and Regional Planning, and five elective planning courses chosen under advisement. This certificate can be combined with the master of public administration (M.P.A.) courses so students can receive an M.P.A. in urban and regional planning degree.

#### Certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The Department of Geography and Planning offers an 18-credit certificate in geographic information systems (GIS). GIS and Global Positioning System (GPS) are technologies that have become prominent workplace tools. Both GIS and GPS are widely used in private and public sectors. The required courses include Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GEO 534), Applications of Geographic Information Systems (GEO 584), and Geographic Field Methods (GEO 585). Three additional courses are to be chosen under advisement and may include Internet Mapping (GEO 507), Environmental Modeling with GIS (GEO 538), Geodatabases (GEO 577) and a GIS-related Internship (GEO 615). An online certificate program in GIS is under development.

Certificate program admission requirements: For full admission, students must have an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution and an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 2.8 or higher.

#### FACILITIES

Facilities available to graduate students include two computer GIS labs. One is a teaching lab devoted to student learning, research, contract projects, and environmental applications (<http://www.wcupa.edu/GIS/>). Another is focused on business geographics and applications

and is located in the Center for GIS and Spatial Analysis (<http://quantifactus.wcupa.edu/>). WCU maintains “industry standard” hardware and software with a site license from ESRI for the ArcGIS platform. Students also have access to academic computing facilities and assistance on campus.

## ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should submit the following materials to the Office of Graduate Studies and Extended Education:

- Completed graduate application (apply online at [www.wcupa.edu/grad](http://www.wcupa.edu/grad))
- Official academic transcript(s) from all colleges and universities attended
- Two letters of recommendation from former faculty and/or (if professionally employed) employment supervisors
- Resume

If applying for full-time study and assistantship support, the candidate’s application should be submitted in February for the following fall. Otherwise, admission is on a rolling basis.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Write: Office of Graduate Studies and Extended Education  
McKelvie Hall  
102 West Rosedale Avenue  
West Chester University  
West Chester, PA 19383

Call: 610-436-2943

Fax: 610-436-2763

E-mail: [gradstudy@wcupa.edu](mailto:gradstudy@wcupa.edu)

Web: [www.wcupa.edu/grad](http://www.wcupa.edu/grad)

Visit: [www.facebook.com/wcugrad](http://www.facebook.com/wcugrad)

Or contact the department:

Write: Dr. Dottie Ives Dewey, Graduate Coordinator  
Department of Geography and Planning  
103 Ruby Jones Hall  
West Chester University  
West Chester, PA 19383

Call: 610-436-2343

E-mail: [divesdewey@wcupa.edu](mailto:divesdewey@wcupa.edu)

Web: [www.wcupa.edu/\\_academics/sch\\_sba.geo/maingeog.asp](http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/sch_sba.geo/maingeog.asp)

The Graduate Catalog is available online at [www.wcupa.edu/\\_information/official\\_documents/graduate.catalog/](http://www.wcupa.edu/_information/official_documents/graduate.catalog/).

## ABOUT GRADUATE STUDIES

West Chester University offers high-quality graduate degrees in more than 70 disciplines or areas of study, as well as certificate and certification programs. The graduate studies program has grown remarkably since its introduction in 1960. West Chester University’s program is the largest within the 14 institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education enrolling more than 2,100 graduate students.

Programs can be taken on a part-time basis, and most of the graduate classes are scheduled during late afternoons and evenings for the benefit of in-service teachers and other employed persons.

## ABOUT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

A regional, public institution, West Chester University of Pennsylvania offers high-quality

undergraduate and graduate degrees, as well as certification and certificate programs, in more than 100 subject areas. As the second largest member of the State System of Higher Education, West Chester offers a full and rewarding educational experience as well as reasonable tuition.

With a rich heritage dating back to the 19th century, West Chester University was founded in 1871 as West Chester Normal School for the purpose of training teachers for the Commonwealth’s newly established public schools. In 1960, West Chester State Teachers College expanded its programs to include liberal arts and graduate degrees and, as a result, dropped “Teachers” from its name. In 1983, West Chester State College became one of the 14 institutions in the State System of Higher Education. Along with its university status, the school acquired a new system of governance and the opportunity to expand its degree programs.

Today, more than 15,400 graduate and undergraduate students, as well as 1,500 faculty and staff, study and work on the 406-acre campus. Situated in the Borough of West Chester, the campus is a picturesque mix of Gothic, Victorian, and modern architecture with pleasant, tree-shaded walks.

Strategically located at the center of the mid-Atlantic corridor, West Chester University is just 25 miles west of Philadelphia and 17 miles north of Wilmington, Del. The campus is convenient to major cultural institutions, recreational activities, and commercial businesses, many of which provide internship opportunities for WCU’s students.

