

GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

The Department of Geography and Planning offers programs that bridge the physical and social sciences, combining the theoretical with practical experience. As a student, you will gain knowledge that can be applied to societal and environmental problems and to future planning. Department programs prepare you for a strong post-graduation job market as well as for advanced educational opportunities. Geographic information systems (GIS) technology is an especially powerful career tool that is increasingly important in many areas of employment. The department offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Career Opportunities

Geography and planning majors from West Chester University are pursuing successful careers at various levels of government service and in private companies and agencies, including the following:

Academy of Natural Sciences (Philadelphia)
Arro Group
Amtrak
Bentley Systems, Inc.
Cahill Associates (environmental planning)
Cartographic Institute
Chester County Department of Computing and Information Services
Chester County Development Council
Chester County Health Department
CH Planning, Limited
City of Philadelphia Mayor's Office of Information Services
City of Philadelphia Police Department Crime Analysis and Mapping Unit
City of Reading
Concurrent Technologies Corporation
Day & Zimmerman, Inc. (information solutions branch)
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources of Pennsylvania
Donnelly Corporation
Environmental Resources Management, Inc.
Environmental Systems Research, Inc. (ESRI)
InfoMap Technologies
Land investment and real estate agencies
Lockheed Martin
McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc. (engineers and planners)
Montgomery County Lands Trust
Municipalities
Natural Lands Trust

Navigation Technologies
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
NUS Corporation (an employer of environmental scientists)
Peace Corps
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Pennsylvania Power and Light, Inc.
Planning commissions for counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Montgomery (Pa.); Cecil and Hartford (Md.); and New Castle (Del.)
Roy F. Weston (environmental engineering)
School districts
Siemens Medical Solutions USA
Signal Corporation
Soil Conservation Service
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
State and private universities
Temple University
Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc. (planning and consulting firm)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Bureau of the Census
U.S. Defense Mapping Agency
U.S. Forestry Department
U.S. State Department
Vertex, Inc.
Vistrionix
Some have entered these careers with the bachelor's degree; others have entered graduate programs at the following institutions:
Drexel University
Indiana University (Bloomington)
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Louisiana State University
Purdue University
Rutgers University
St. Joseph's University
State University of New York at Albany
State University of New York at Buffalo
Texas A & M
Temple University
Towson State University
University of Alabama
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Maryland
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Learn More

UNDERGRADUATE FACT SHEET

University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of South Carolina
University of Tennessee
Villanova University
Virginia Tech
West Chester University
Widener University School of Law

Undergraduate Degree

Bachelor of Arts in Geography. This program offers you the choice of five “tracks,” or areas of concentration: geography, urban/regional planning, geographic information systems (GIS), environmental, and elective social studies teacher certification.

All of these programs provide a sound general education. A concentration in urban/regional planning prepares you for careers in planning and related fields. The environmental track is for those with an interest in the environment or sustainability. Those with an interest in human geography or in international studies usually choose the general geography track. The GIS track is designed for careers in public and private agencies in which computer analysis of spatial data is a critical concern. The social studies education track prepares students to teach at the secondary education level.

Minor Programs

Business Geographics and Information Systems
Geography

Related Student Activities

Geography Club
Gamma Theta Upsilon (international honor society)
EARTH Club (environmental group)

Facilities

The Department of Geography and Planning is located in Ruby Jones Hall, a charming, stately building on the corner of Church Street and University Avenue. Facilities and classrooms also are located in Anderson Hall. On the ground floor of Ruby Jones Hall is the primary geography computer lab, a place for carrying out course assignments in computer cartography, Geographic information systems (GIS), and similar techniques courses. Additional GIS labs are located in Anderson Hall (business and environmental applications).

The department places strong emphasis on interdisciplinary cooperation and research, including GIS applications in the fields of environmental and health sciences, urban and regional planning, and business

management and marketing. You may work with faculty on contracts/projects with public and private agencies in applying GIS skills for real-world problem solving.

Special Study Opportunities

If you are a qualified junior or senior, and you desire to participate, internship placements are possible, many of which are paid. Internships also are available to graduate students. Geography and planning students have participated in student exchange programs in the United States and abroad.

Advanced Degrees

Master of Arts in Geography
Master of Public Administration with a certificate in Urban and Regional Planning
Certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
Certification in Urban and Regional Planning

Faculty

You can obtain a complete listing of faculty and their academic qualifications for this program from the contact person listed below.

For More Information

Dr. Dottie Ives Dewey, Chairperson
Department of Geography and Planning
103 Ruby Jones Hall
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383
610-436-2746 or 436-2343
E-mail: divesdewey@wcupa.edu
Web page: http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/sch_sba.geo/default.asp
Undergraduate Catalog: http://www.wcupa.edu/_information/official.documents/undergrad.catalog/

Information on Admission

Office of Admissions

Emil H. Messikomer Hall, 100 West Rosedale Ave.
West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383
610-436-3411 • Toll-free: 1-877-315-2165

E-mail: ugadmiss@wcupa.edu
WCU home page: www.wcupa.edu
Facebook: www.facebook.com/wcupa

