

GEOGRAPHY

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY

Environmental geographers are concerned with how human beings use the earth and impact the environment.

Environmental Management
Conservation
Waste Management
Environmental Regulation
Emergency Management
Outdoor Recreation Management

EMPLOYERS

Federal and state government: Environmental Protection Agency, Departments of Agriculture, National Forest Service, National Park Service
Real estate developers
Scientific and research groups
Waste management companies
Chemical companies
Firms specializing in forestry, mining, environmental issues, or surveying
Law firms

STRATEGIES

Become skilled in related computer technology.
Take biology and chemistry courses for environmental management positions.
Take electives in plant science, forestry and wildlife management for careers in recreation and forestry management.
Join environmental organizations on campus and in your community.
Seek environmental-related experience through internships, summer or part-time jobs.
Learn federal government job application process.
Earn a law degree for work areas such as environmental law and policy.

CULTURAL & HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Cultural and human geographers study the aspects of geography that relate to different cultures. They especially focus on cultural origins and movement and the cultural characteristics of regions.

Cultural Resources
Historic Preservation
Historical Consultation
Community Development/Redevelopment
Education
Research

State, regional, and local government
Peace Corps
Real estate developers
Companies dealing with insurance, transportation, communications, and international trade
Scientific and research groups
Museums

Develop an open mind towards the language, history, customs, and culture of other countries.
Learn how to conduct library research, make field observations, and interpret artifacts.
Learn a foreign language for field observations in other countries.
Participate in cross-cultural groups and organizations.
Develop excellent communication and teamwork skills in order to work with historians and archivists in recreating the geography of the past.
Obtain related experience in your area of interest through volunteer or paid positions including internships.
Become skilled in related computer technology.
Learn federal, state, and local government job application process.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

GEOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY

Geographers utilize a variety of technologies to generate maps, store, analyze and interpret map information.

Cartography
Geographic Information Systems
Remote Sensing

Federal government agencies: Departments of Defense, Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, and State, Defense Mapping, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Central Intelligence Agency

State and regional government agencies:
Departments of Transportation or Agriculture
Private industry including telephone, utilities, construction, engineering, energy, environmental planning, and consulting firms
Map publishers
Mapping software companies
Colleges and universities

Take courses in surveying and measurements, photogrammetry, computer systems, database management, technical mathematics, drafting, statistics, optics, remote sensing, art, graphics.
Learn to be detail-oriented.
Gain experience reading maps and interpreting data sources including geological surveys and satellite images.
Seek related experience, such as a part-time job or internship, to develop technical skills.
Investigate federal, state, and local government job application process.

PLANNING

Planners ensure that communities develop in an orderly way and that they have the services necessary to support them.

City/Regional Planning
Housing Development
Convention/Tourism
Community Development
Demography
Transportation
Waste Management
Conservation

City, county, and regional planning agencies
Local and state government
Federal government agencies including: Agency for International Development, World Bank, Department of Housing and Urban Development
Research organizations
Private business
Banks
Industrial firms
Public utilities
Architecture firms
Real estate developers

Develop team work and communication skills.
Participate in student government.
Take courses in public administration or public finance.
Observe city/county advisory meetings.
Seek internship or work experience in a local government office, as they are a large employer in this area.
Learn federal, state, and local government job application process.
Obtain master's degree in planning.
Earn a dual degree in planning and law.
Research the certified planning credential obtained through the American Institute of Certified Planners.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

Physical geographers study earth processes such as climate and weather. They also evaluate the impact of natural hazards such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and earthquakes.

Biogeography
Geomorphology
Natural Hazards
Weather and Climate
Hydrology
Environmental Regulation
Waste Management and Disposal

State and local government
Federal government agencies including:
US Department of Agriculture, US Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, The National Resources Conservation Service
TV/Radio stations
Agribusiness corporations
Outdoor recreation companies
Resource management agencies
Research institutes
Insurance companies

Develop strong analytical and communication skills.
Take courses in physics, chemistry, soil science, agriculture.
Take courses like weather systems, atmospheric dynamics, thermodynamics, physical meteorology for more job options in meteorology/atmospheric science.
Gain experience through part-time jobs, internships or volunteer opportunities related to climate, weather or natural hazards.
Be willing to relocate to regions that have job availability.

ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

Economic geographers study the distribution of resources and economic activities within a certain region. They may use this information to advise organizations on where to build new facilities.

Location Scouting
Real Estate Analysis
Transportation
Agricultural Planning
Travel/Tourism Planning

Federal, state, and local government
Market research firms
Manufacturing, wholesale, and retail firms
Public utilities
Consulting firms
Real estate appraisers and developers
Banks

Develop strong communication skills.
Take business courses such as economics, advertising, marketing, finance, statistics to increase marketability in the field.
Earn a business minor.
Learn to see all sides of a problem, including economic, social, political, and environmental.
Observe city/county advisory meetings.
Obtain business or planning-related work/volunteer experience to build contacts and increase marketability.
Consider earning a master's degree in planning.

GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION

Geography teachers may specialize in one or more areas of the discipline or incorporate it into a social science education program.

Teaching
Research

Elementary/secondary schools, public and private
Colleges and universities

Develop strong communication skills, both oral and written.
Seek volunteer or paid experiences, such as camp counselor or tutor, with target age group.
Research state standards for certification.
Obtain certification/licensure for public school teaching.
Obtain multiple certifications for increased employability.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION CONTINUED

Specialize in an area such as quantitative research techniques, computer mapping, or natural resource management.
Join National Council for Geographic Education.
Complete a master's degree for community college teaching or a Ph.D. for college/university teaching and research.
Maintain a high grade point average and build strong faculty recommendations to prepare for graduate school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Bachelor's degree qualifies you for entry-level positions in government and industry.
- Master's degree qualifies you for community college teaching and advancement in industry and government.
- Ph.D. is required for research and teaching positions in colleges and universities and senior positions in government and industry.
- Geography provides a broad foundation for future career endeavors.
- Obtain volunteer, part-time, summer, internship, or co-op experience in your area of interest.
- Join professional organizations such as the American Geography Society or the National Council for Geographic Education.
- Become a member of groups directed toward improvement of natural resources or environment and pollution control.
- Maintain knowledge of current environmental issues including policy, conservation, and industry trends.
- Computer knowledge is extremely important in geography. Obtain experience with geographic information systems.
- Develop strong mathematical and statistical skills.
- Develop skills and interest in mapping, graphics, and charts. An interest in photography may prove beneficial.
- Develop good communication skills.