Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of General Studies in Geography

Why study geography?

The BA and BGS degrees each offer a different educational experience and students should carefully consider which degree is most appropriate to meet their educational goals.

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

The Bachelor of Arts in Geography provides a broad liberal arts education and touches on all aspects of Geography. Study includes a minimum of 33 credit hours in Geography: a core of eighteen hours in regional, physical, human, and statistical geography plus another fifteen hours of electives. Students need to meet the KU Core requirements and/or requirements set by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences including a non-English language. Students taking the B.A. degrees should note that most Geography graduate programs require a statistics course, e.g., GEOG 316, and we highly recommend a basic course in GIS, e.g., GEOG 358.

Bachelor of General Studies (BGS)

The Bachelor of General Studies degree allows for more specialization in a student’s main area of interest while still providing a solid foundation. There are fewer principal courses required, but students must complete a concentration (three upper division courses) or a minor in a second field of study (usually 18 hours). There is no non-English language requirement for the BGS. Please note that most geography graduate programs require a statistics course, e.g., GEOG 316, and we highly recommend a basic course in GIS, e.g., GEOG 358.

Undergraduate Admission

Admission to KU

All students applying for admission must send high school and college transcripts to the Office of Admissions. Unless they are college transfer students with at least 24 hours of credit, prospective students must send ACT or SAT scores to the Office of Admissions. Prospective first-year students should be aware that KU has qualified admission requirements that all new first-year students must meet to be admitted. Consult the Office of Admissions (http://admissions.ku.edu) for application deadlines and specific admission requirements.

Visit the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (http://www.iss.ku.edu) for information about international admissions.

Students considering transferring to KU may see how their college-level course work will transfer on the Office of Admissions (http://credittransfer.ku.edu) website.

Admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Admission to the College is a different process from admission to a major field. Some CLAS departments have admission requirements.

Geography Programs

The B.A., B.G.S., and B.S. in geography provide general liberal arts enrichment, preparation for graduate work, and training for careers in geography and related fields. Geography may be combined with another program as a double major, or courses in another area may simply be added to those in geography.

First- and Second-Year Preparation

Students should begin the major by meeting the core requirements and preparing for major courses.

Requirements for the B.A. or B.G.S. Major

Geography Core Knowledge and Skills (19)

Majors must complete a course in each of the following areas:

- Principles of Physical Geography. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 104 Principles of Physical Geography (Required Geography Courses) 3

- Introductory Laboratory in Physical Geography. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 105 Introductory Laboratory in Physical Geography 2

- Principles of Human Geography. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 102 People, Place, and Society 3
  - GEOG 103 Principles of Human Geography, Honors

- Geographic Information Science. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 111 Mapping Our Changing World 4
  - GEOG 358 Principles of Geographic Information Systems

- Geographical Analysis. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 311 Introductory Cartography and Geovisualization 4
  - GEOG 316 Methods of Analyzing Geographical Data

- Senior Capstone in Geography. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 500 Senior Capstone in Geography 3

- Geography Required Elective Hours (0)

Majors must complete five courses (15 hours) at the 200-500 level, in addition to the core above, from at least 3 of the following 4 groups, one of which must be a regional course:

- Physical Studies. Satisfied by:
  - GEOG 148 Scientific Principles of Environmental Studies
  - GEOG 304 Environmental Conservation
  - GEOG 321 Climate and Climate Change
  - GEOG 332 Glaciers and Landscape
  - GEOG 335 Introduction to Soil Geography
  - GEOG 336 Introduction to Environmental Hydrology and Water Resources
  - GEOG 338 Introduction to River Systems
  - GEOG 339 Topics in Physical Geography: ______
  - GEOG 521 Micrometeorology
  - GEOG 531 Topics in Physical Geography: ______
  - GEOG 532 Geoarchaeology
  - GEOG 535 Soil Geography
  - GEOG 538 Soil Chemistry
  - GEOG 540 Ecohydrology
  - GEOG 541 Geomorphology

See individual department/program sections for departmental admission requirements.
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Major Hours & Major GPA

While completing all required courses (above), majors must also meet each of the following hour and grade-point average minimum standards:

**Major Hours**
- Satisfied by 34 hours of major courses.

**Major Hours in Residence**
- Satisfied by a minimum of 15 hours of KU resident credit in the major.

**Major Junior/Senior (300+) Hours**
- Satisfied by a minimum of 12 hours from junior/senior courses (300+) in the major.

**Major Junior/Senior (300+) Graduation GPA**
- Satisfied by a minimum of a 2.0 KU GPA in junior/senior courses (300+) in the major. GPA calculations include all junior/senior courses in the field of study including F’s and repeated courses. See the Semester/Cumulative GPA Calculator (http://clas.ku.edu/undergrad/tools/gpa).

A sample 4-year plan for the BA degree in Geography can be found here: Geography (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/geography/ba-bgs-geography/ba), or by using the left-side navigation.

Sample 4-year plans for the BGS degree in Geography can be found here: Geography (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/geography/ba-bgs-geography/BGS-in-Geography), or by using the left-side navigation.

**Departmental Honors in Geography**

To be accepted as a candidate for honors, an undergraduate major must have completed at least 9 hours of upper-division credit in geography with a grade-point average of 3.5 in all geography courses and of at least 3.25 overall. In addition to outstanding work in geography, the program requires GEOG 499, an independent study course consisting of an honors paper.

The student presents the results of this paper in an oral examination to a committee of at least 2 faculty members, normally from the geography department, chaired by the GEOG 499 supervisor. To graduate with honors, the student must complete the paper and the examination and maintain the 3.5 and 3.25 grade-point averages.