

Student Learning Outcomes for M.A. Program in Geography

Students in the M.A. degree program will:

1. demonstrate an ability to develop a research proposal and carry out independent research
2. have an in-depth understanding of, and mastery of the literature in, at least one particular geographic subfield
3. demonstrate an ability to present and defend research work in oral, written, and graphic forms

Alignment Matrix for M.A. Program in Geography – For each stated student learning outcome, where does the student have the opportunity to learn the outcome (e.g., specific courses, multiple courses, or other program requirements) and where is student achievement of the outcome is assessed (e.g., assignments in courses, evaluation of final thesis, report, dissertation)?

| SLO/Required Courses/experiences | GEOG 821 | GEOG 898/899 | Annual Faculty Discussion of Student Progress | Thesis/Report Defense |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Degree program SLOs | | | | |
| Independent research | X | X | X A | X A |
| Subfield expertise | | X | X A | X A |
| Presentation/defense of research | X | X | X A | X A |
| | | | | |
| University SLOs (Graduate Programs) | | | | |
| Knowledge | | X | X A | X A |
| Skills | X | X | X A | X A |
| Attitudes and Professional Conduct | X | X | X A | X A |

- Place an “X” for courses or experiences in which students have the opportunity to learn the outcome (coursework, other program requirements).
- Place an “A” for courses or experiences in which student performance is used for program level assessment of the outcome. (assignments in courses, evaluation of final thesis, report, dissertation)

Progress Made Since 2004 on Assessment of Student Learning in the Geography M.A. Program

The M.S. degree in geography was approved in 1959, and the degree was changed to a M.A. in 1966. Our master's program remains one of the strongest in the region and demand for the degree has been high. The Kansas Board of Regents expects programs to enroll a minimum of 20 Masters degree students each year, averaged over five years. We have enrolled an average of 19 students since 2004-05, essentially meeting this standard (which is not calibrated for size of program). In the last five years, 13 students completed their MA in geography; the Kansas Board of Regents minimum expectation is 5. We currently have 21 MA students in the program, with 13 in residence.

Among the recent graduates since 2004-05, 11 are working as GIS specialists at government agencies or private companies. A number of these students leave the department with higher-paying starting salaries than tenured faculty members in the department. Several M.A. graduates from the KSU Geography Department have moved on to well-recognized doctoral programs to continue their graduate education (e.g., University of Arizona, University of Kansas, University of Utah, and University of Washington).

Student Learning Outcomes for Ph.D. Program in Geography

Students in the Ph.D. degree program will:

1. demonstrate an ability to develop a research proposal and carry out independent research
2. have an in-depth understanding of, and mastery of the literature in, at least one particular geographic subfield
3. demonstrate an ability to present and defend research work in oral, written, and graphic forms

Alignment Matrix for Ph.D. Program in Geography – For each stated student learning outcome, where does the student have the opportunity to learn the outcome (e.g., specific courses, multiple courses, or other program requirements) and where is student achievement of the outcome is assessed (e.g., assignments in courses, evaluation of final thesis, report, dissertation)?

| SLO/Required Courses/experiences | Annual Faculty Discussion of Student Progress | Proposal Presentation | Preliminary Exams | Dissertation Defense | Publication Submissions |
|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Degree program SLOs | | | | | |
| Independent research | | X | X A | X A | X A |
| Subfield expertise | X | X | X A | X A | X A |
| Presentation/defense of research | X | X | X A | X A | X A |
| University SLOs (Graduate Programs) | | | | | |
| Knowledge | X | X | X A | X A | X A |
| Skills | X | X | X A | X A | X A |
| Attitudes and Professional Conduct | X | X | X A | X A | X A |

- Place an “X” for courses or experiences in which students have the opportunity to learn the outcome (coursework, other program requirements).
- Place an “A” for courses or experiences in which student performance is used for program level assessment of the outcome. (assignments in courses, evaluation of final thesis, report, dissertation)

Progress Made Since 2004 on Assessment of Student Learning in the Geography Ph.D. Program

The Ph.D. in Geography was approved in 1995. The first doctoral degrees were awarded in 2000. 16 students have graduated, and 26 students are currently active in the program. Applicants for the program have come from across the United States and from many other countries (e.g., Canada, China, India, South Korea, and Ghana). The Board of Regents expects a five-year average of 5 doctoral students enrolled in a program each year: our five-year average is 17. The regents expect 2 doctoral degrees to be awarded per year, averaged over a 5-year period; we have awarded 7 in the last 5 years. Our relatively new program has 10 students who have achieved ABD status, so we expect the total number graduating to continue to meet the BOR standard in upcoming years.

Ten of our Ph.D. graduates hold a faculty position at four-year universities throughout the United States, including the University of North Dakota (2), Morehead State University in Kentucky, Fort Hays State University, Eastern Illinois University, Auburn University, Minot State University, Macalester College, University of Wyoming, and Kansas State University. Six of our doctoral candidates already hold faculty positions at Missouri State University, Emporia State University, Coppin State University, Owens Community College (OH), and Wayne State University (IA).