

Department of Geography
Graduate Student Handbook
2016-2017

Compiled by the Graduate Committee,
Department of Geography

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General Program Information

Forms

Links to graduate forms listed in this handbook are available on the Department of Geography website.

<http://www.geog.utah.edu/forms.html>

Student Progress

- **Students are required to demonstrate adequate progress toward a degree each semester to be approved for continued study by the department.**
 - The student's advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Committee will determine whether adequate progress is being met, in accordance with Department and Graduate School requirements.
- Students are required to complete an annual [progress assessment](#).
 - The purpose of the assessment is to help students set goals for completing their degrees, and to help advisors evaluate student progress and impediments to progress.
 - **This assessment is due by the end of the first week of Spring Semester, and should be submitted to the student's advisor.**
 - The department encourages students to consult with their advisors on filling out the assessment.

Grade Policies

- **Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 with no grade lower than a "B-" in courses taken for graduate credit.**

Ethics

Students are expected to adhere to a high standard of ethics in their research, course work, and examinations, as outlined in the [University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Violation of ethical standards can result in disciplinary action by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Dismissal Procedure

- Students may be dismissed from the graduate program as the result of failure to make progress towards degree (including completion of coursework, proposal and proposal presentation, qualifying exams, thesis/dissertation, defense, and filing of thesis/dissertation), having a cumulative grade point average below a 3.0 for more than one semester, not maintaining active enrollment in Geography classes, failure of written or oral exams, failure of thesis or dissertation defense, violation of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>), or violation of ethical standards.
- In cases of failure to make progress, students will be warned in writing at least one semester before a dismissal vote, and given required progress to meet by a deadline.
- Dismissal cases will be voted on by the Graduate Committee, requiring at least a two-thirds approval of the Committee for dismissal from the graduate program.

Electronic Graduate Record File

Students may view their Electronic Graduate Record File to make sure they are on track for graduation, verify the accuracy of the entered information, and track missing approvals. A tutorial for using the system is located at:

<http://gradschool.utah.edu/current-students/electronic-graduate-record-file-tutorial/>

Required Proficiencies and Coursework

- Advisors may expect basic proficiencies in statistics, GIS, cartography, writing, and mathematics. Courses taken to gain these skills cannot be used to satisfy graduate degree requirements, and are not included in tuition benefit.
- **Students should consult with their advisor to discuss specific proficiencies needed for their degree.**
- The instructor of GEOG 6961, taken during the student's first fall semester, may make recommendations to advisors regarding writing proficiency.

Course Credit Hours per Semester

- **Students must register for at least one course per semester to stay active in the program.**
- Students registered for 5-8 credits per semester are considered part time.
- Graduate students are considered full time when:
 - **they are registered for 9 or more graduate credit hours**
 - they have been enrolled in the program for at least two consecutive semesters of 9 credit hours or more, are registered for 3 credits hours per semester, and are registered for at least one credit hour of Thesis Research (GEOG 6970), Dissertation Research (GEOG 7970) or Faculty Consultation (GEOG 6981 for Master's or GEOG 7981 for Ph.D). Faculty Consultation (GEOG 6981 or 7981) does not count toward fulfillment of degree requirements.
- Do not register for less than 3 credit hours of full-time enrollment (above) if you must be a full-time student (i.e. you are on a student visa, need to defer student loans, need student classification for health insurance, have a scholarship/fellowship requiring full-time status), use campus resources (other than library privileges) or use faculty consultation resources moderately or more
- **Teaching Assistants, Graduate Assistants and Graduate Fellows cannot exceed 12 credit hours per semester.**
- **Research Assistants cannot exceed 11 credit hours per semester, but may register for up to 3 credit hours in the summer if minimum support levels are met**
- Funded students exceeding the maximum number of credit hours per semester will be responsible for payment for these additional credit hours, charged at the resident rate.
- Students cannot register for more than 16 credit hours in any semester.
- Ph.D. students who have passed their qualifying exam may register for up to 4 semesters of Continuing Registration (GEOG 7990). This course has a small charge, and is meant for students not using University facilities or faculty time. Continuing Registration does not defer student loans, but does provide library privileges.

Independent Study Courses

Students doing independent study courses such as Individual Projects or Direct Reading (i.e. GEOG 6950, 7950, 6951, 7951, etc.) must complete a [Request for Individual Projects](#) form, have the form signed by the course instructor, and return the form to the office staff to get a registration number.

Credit/No Credit

- In general, graduate students are not permitted to take courses on a "Credit/No Credit" (CR/NC) basis.
 - Certain exemptions exist for this rule; see the Graduate School website for details (<http://gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-catalog/grading-and-credit-policies/>).
 - The Director of Graduate Studies must approve any courses taken on a CR/NC basis.

Transferring Credits

Up to 6 credit hours of graduate credit may be transferred from the University of Utah or other institutions and applied toward graduate degree requirements.

- Courses can only count toward one degree. A course that counts toward earning a prior degree cannot count toward earning a graduate degree from the Department.
- Transferred credits must have been taken within four years of a Master's student's first semester and within seven years of a Ph.D. student's first semester. Students must have received an A or B grade in the course to transfer the credits.
- Transferred credits must be approved by the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Transferred credits cannot replace the research course requirement (GEOG 6960 or GEOG 6400-6599) or GEOG 6961.

Non-Matriculated Credits

Up to 9 credit hours of graduate credit earned by non-matriculated students may be applied to a graduate degree program.

- Credits must be taken no more than 3 years prior to approval.
- Non-matriculated credits must be approved by the student's supervisory committee and the Director of Graduate Studies.

- Applying more than 9 hours of non-matriculated work to the degree requires approval by the dean of The Graduate School.

Colloquium Attendance

The Department sponsors a colloquium series in which presentations are made by faculty, graduate students, and guest speakers.

- Students are strongly encouraged to attend colloquium regularly.
- **Colloquium attendance is required for all funded students.**
 - **Funded students should register for 1 hour of Research Practicum (GEOG 6900 for Master's students and GEOG 7900 for Ph.D. students), unless they are already enrolled for the maximum number of credits indicated above.**
 - Funded students are required to sign an attendance sheet available at each colloquium as evidence of their participation in colloquium. Colloquium attendance will be the basis for students' grades in Research Practicum.

Leave of Absence

A student who is not able to register for classes due to justifiable, extenuating circumstances can request a leave of absence.

- The leave of absence must be approved by the student's advisor and the Department Chair, who will recommend that the Graduate School grant a leave.
- **A leave of absence can be taken for a maximum of one year.**
- Time on leave does not count toward the 4 years allowed to complete the Master's program or the 6 years allowed to complete the Ph.D. program.
- Retroactive leaves of absence are not granted.
- Students can download the [Graduate Student Request for Leave of Absence](#) form from the University of Utah Registrar's Office website.

Lapse of Registration

A graduate student who fails to register for a term (excluding summer terms) is immediately made ineligible to register for future terms.

- A student who is unable or not permitted to register for a term must reapply for admission to graduate studies at the University.
 - A completed graduate admissions application with fee must be made through the online ApplyYourself application system by the appropriate term deadline.
 - The student should also contact the Department regarding their readmission to the program.

Parental Leave

The Department is committed to supporting graduate students who are expecting a child and wish to take a leave of absence from their Masters or Ph.D. program to care for their child.

- Students may request a leave of absence for up to one year for the birth or adoption of a child (see Leave of Absence above).
- Time on parental leave does not count toward the 4 years allowed to complete the Master's program or the 6 years allowed to complete the Ph.D. program.
- If a student is supported on an assistantship, she or he should notify the Department Chair and Director of Graduate Studies before the beginning of the semester if she or he is expecting a child that semester and anticipating taking leave.
- If a student experiences a medical condition associated with their pregnancy and needs accommodations recommended by their medical provider, she should contact the University's Title IX Coordinator, who will work with the student, the Department, and administration to determine what accommodations are reasonable and effective.

The Geography MS Program

All work for the Geography Master's of Science degree must be completed within 4 consecutive calendar years. The program is outlined on the [Master's Record of Progress](#) form. Students can record and track their progress on this form.

Course Requirements

- A minimum of 30 credit hours are required for the Master's degree.
 - **A minimum of 6 credit hours must be in GEOG 6970 (Thesis Research) or GEOG 6974 (Technical Report Research)**
- Graduate students must register for courses listed as 6000 level or above to obtain graduate credit.
 - An exception is available for courses listed at the 5000 level if that course does not have a listing at the 6000 level or above.
- **Master's students are required to complete the following courses:**
 - GEOG 6961 (Seminar in Geographic Thought and Inquiry), which must be taken during fall semester of the student's first year of graduate study.
 - GEOG 6000 (Spatial Statistics)
 - Two research courses totaling 6 credits. These courses can be GEOG 6960 or from the range of courses offered as GEOG 6400-6599. Students cannot take both research courses from the same faculty member.
 - A minimum of 10 credit hours of elective courses taken at the 6000 level or above, or at the 5000 level if a suitable course is not available at the 6000 level.
 - A minimum of 6 credit hours of GEOG 6970 (Thesis Research) or GEOG 6974 (Technical Report Research). Up to 10 credit hours of GEOG 6970 or GEOG 6974 may be counted towards the Master's Degree. Students choosing the manuscript option should take GEOG 6970.

Supervisory Committee

A Supervisory Committee advises a student in planning their program of study and thesis research or technical report preparation. Master's students should ideally identify an advisor during their first semester in the Department, and nominate a Supervisory Committee during their second semester. The Graduate School expects that all students will nominate a Supervisory Committee by the beginning of their third semester.

- A Master's supervisory committee consists of three faculty members, the majority of whom must be regular faculty from the department.
 - **The committee chair must be a regular faculty member in the department.**
 - Students should work with their advisor to determine appropriate committee members.
- Students must provide the Department and the Graduate School with a vita for any committee members not from the University of Utah.
- Students need to submit the [Request for Supervisory Committee](#) form to nominate their committee. This form is available on the Geography Department website.
- **A student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee must approve the student's program of study.**

Thesis, Manuscript, and Technical Report Options

Master's students must choose between the thesis option, manuscript option, and the technical report option.

- Students should work with their Advisor and Supervisory Committee to select the thesis, manuscript, or technical report option.
- **The Supervisory Committee is required to approve the selected option by signing the [Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form.**
- Any change in option must be approved by the committee and documented on the [Request to Change Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Option](#) form.
- The thesis and manuscript options are appropriate for most Master's students, and offer the freedom to enter a Ph.D. program at some point in the future.
- **A Master's earned by the technical report option will prohibit the student from entering the Department's Ph.D. program and Geography Ph.D. programs at other academic institutions.**
- The technical report option is appropriate for graduate student programs that emphasize:
 - applied, rather than basic research

- professional training and certification
 - documentation of technical innovations and creations
 - preparation of instructional and educational materials
 - preparation of site, urban, regional, land-use, resource, and environmental planning documents
 - preparation and review of environmental impact statements and assessments
 - documentation pertaining to natural and technological hazards assessment, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- The manuscript option is a modified thesis option with the following guidelines:
 - **This option is only available at the discretion of the student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee**
 - The manuscript document should be written in the form of a *publishable* manuscript targeted to a specific journal, together with introduction and conclusion chapters.
 - Publishable quality consists of two components: a) the content of the manuscript, and b) the style and presentation of the manuscript.
 - The targeted journal must be identified as a high quality outlet for the type of research conducted and must be approved by the student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee.
 - Publication of the document does not fulfill graduation requirements. The document must still be approved by the student's advisor and committee.
 - Publication is not required for completion of degree requirements.
 - Contact the Thesis Editor for guidelines on formatting the manuscript to meet the University's thesis formatting requirements.

Master's Proposal

Students must submit a thesis, manuscript/thesis, or technical report proposal to their Supervisory Committee.

- The proposal should contain the following elements:
 - An introductory statement
 - A statement describing the goals of the research and the potential contributions of the research
 - An explicit statement of the hypothesis to be tested or problem to be solved
 - A description of the methodology, including the steps in the research procedure, techniques that will be used, a timeline that includes deadlines for each step, and an assessment of data availability
 - A bibliography of sufficient length to demonstrate that the student has acceptable background in his or her area of research
- Upon supervisory committee approval of the student's proposal, a digital copy of the proposal must be submitted along with the [Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form to the Department Graduate Secretary.

Colloquium Presentation

Master's students are required to present their proposal in a colloquium presentation.

- **To schedule a colloquium presentation, students are required to have the following:**
 - A completed [Supervisory Committee](#) form
 - Permission from their advisor to schedule their colloquium.
- **Presentations are scheduled at the beginning of Fall and Spring semesters and the end of Spring semester.**
 - Once you have fulfilled the requirements listed above, contact the Colloquium Committee Chair to determine the next presentation date, and notify the Colloquium Committee Chair of your intention to present.
- The completed colloquium presentation is documented on the student's [Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form and must be completed before the student is allowed to register for Thesis Research (GEOG 6970) or Technical Report Research (GEOG 6974).

Program of Study

- The following items must be completed to apply for candidacy (using the [Application for Admission to Candidacy](#) form):
 - Completed and signed [Supervisory Committee](#) form
 - Thesis/technical report proposal approved by entire supervisory committee

- Completion of colloquium presentation
- Department faculty approval of the student's thesis/technical report proposal
- Approval of the student's program of study by the Supervisory Committee, Graduate Director, and Department Chair.
- The program of study needs to be entered one semester prior to graduation.

Master's Thesis and Technical Report Guidelines

- The Master's thesis (including the manuscript option) should demonstrate a student's ability to identify a research problem, develop or apply appropriate methodology, research defensible conclusions, and communicate results to a general scientific audience.
- The Master's technical report should demonstrate a student's ability to identify an application problem, develop or apply appropriate methodology and either solve the problem or develop a product that can be used in the application context.
- The thesis or technical report must reflect original work by the student and meet the formatting guidelines of the University
 - Approved reference styles can be found at <http://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis/department-approved-style-guides-2/>
- **The thesis or technical report must be submitted to the Supervisory Committee at least 14 days prior to establishing a date for the student's Master's defense.**
 - After the 14 day period, if all members of the Supervisory Committee are in agreement, a defense can be scheduled.

Applying for Graduation

Students must complete an [Application for Graduate Degree](#) with the Registrar's Office, Graduation Division (window 15 Student Services Building) several months before their planned semester of graduation. Deadlines for submission are:

- Fall semester (December)—July 1st
- Spring semester (May)—November 1st
- Summer semester (August)—March 1st
- Applications will not be accepted more than one year in advance.

Master's Defense

The Master's defense consists of a public presentation of the student's thesis, manuscript, or technical report, followed by a period for audience questions and a closed session for questions from the student's Supervisory Committee.

- By majority vote, the members of the Supervisory Committee must certify on the [Report of the Final Examination for the Master's Degree](#) form that the thesis or technical report has been found satisfactory for the degree.
- The candidate must be enrolled in one course at the University of Utah during the semester of the Master's defense.
 - Most students register for GEOG 6970 (Thesis Research), GEOG 6974 (Technical Report Research), or GEOG 6981 (Faculty Consultation) during the semester of their defense. GEOG 6981 does not count toward fulfillment of degree requirements.

Filing Your Thesis

After making any changes to the thesis (including the manuscript option) that the student's Supervisory Committee may require after the Master's defense, the student will then submit a one sided, hard copy of the thesis with the signed [Supervisory Committee Approval](#) form to the Department Chair for approval on the [Final Reading Approval](#) form. Students are responsible for printing their own documents.

- Chair's approval can take up to 10 business days.
- Following Chair's approval, students must submit the approved paper copy of the thesis and the [Committee and Final Reading Approval forms](#) to the Thesis Office (302 Park Building) for format approval.
- **Students must submit their final thesis to the Thesis Office within 4 months of their defense date.**
- Once formatting and all other requirements for graduation have been met, a Thesis Release is issued.

- All processing and uploading of the thesis must be completed by the Thesis Editor's published deadline for graduation in that semester.

Submitting Your Technical Report

- By majority vote, have Supervisory Committee sign the [Technical Report Approval form](#).
- Two copies of the complete technical report (including all datasets, graphics, and other attachment(s) are to be provided to the Department in a final form that is suitable for permanent archiving (and controlled circulation among students and other borrowers), plus a digital copy on a CD.
- All processing of the technical report must be completed by the last day of finals for graduation in that semester

The Ph.D. Program

Ph.D. students are required to spend at least one year (2 consecutive semesters of at least 9 credit hours each) in continuous residence at the University of Utah. The Department allows 6 years for completion of the Ph.D. program. The program is outlined on the [Ph.D. Record of Progress](#) form. Students may track and record their progress on this form.

Course Requirements

- A minimum of 32 credit hours is required for the Ph.D.
 - **A minimum of 14 credit hours must be GEOG 7970 (Dissertation Research)**
- Graduate students must register for courses listed as 6000 or above to obtain graduate credit.
 - An exception is available for courses listed at the 5000 level if that course does not have a listing at the 6000 level or above.
- **Ph.D. students are required to complete the following courses:**
 - GEOG 6961 (Seminar in Geographic Thought and Inquiry), which must be taken during fall semester of the student's first year of graduate study.
 - GEOG 6000 (Spatial Statistics)
 - Two research courses totaling 6 credits. These courses can be GEOG 6960, or from the range of courses offered as GEOG 6400-6599. Students cannot take both research courses from the same faculty member.
 - One credit hour of GEOG 7930 (Teaching Practicum).
 - A minimum of 5 credit hours of elective courses taken at the 6000 level or above, or at the 5000 level if a suitable course is not available at the 6000 level.
 - GEOG 6000 and 6961 taken as a Master's student in the Department of Geography at the University of Utah do not have to be retaken, but elective courses must be substituted to fulfill the 32 credit hour requirement. Elective coursework is selected with the approval of the student's Supervisory Committee.

Supervisory Committee

A Supervisory Committee advises a student in planning their program of study and dissertation research. Ph.D. students should ideally identify an advisor during their first semester in the Department, and nominate a Supervisory Committee during their second semester. The Graduate School expects that all students will nominate a Supervisory Committee by the beginning of their third semester.

- A Ph.D. Supervisory Committee consists of five faculty members, the majority of whom must be regular faculty from the department.
 - **The committee chair must be a regular faculty member in the department.**
 - At least one member of the Supervisory Committee must be from outside of the Geography Department.
 - Students should work with their Advisor to determine appropriate committee members.
- Students must provide the Department and the Graduate School with a vita for any committee members not from the University of Utah.
- Students need to submit the [Request for Supervisory Committee](#) form to nominate their committee. This form is available from the Geography Department website.
- **A student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee must approve the student's program of study.**

Teaching Requirement

- **Each Ph.D. student must participate in a practical teaching experience during her or his program.**
- The student should enroll in GEOG 7930 (Teaching Practicum) for a minimum of one credit hour during the semester of this practical teaching experience.
- The nature of the teaching experience will be determined by the student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee
- Students and advisors must complete and sign an [Independent Study Form](#) and return it to the staff to get the registration information.

Research Skills Requirement

- All Ph.D. students in the Department of Geography must demonstrate proficiency in at least two geographic skills.
 - These skills may include competence in a foreign language at the Standard or Advanced Proficiency level, cartography and geo-visualization, field methods, geo-computational methods, graphic information science (GIS), macrofossil analysis, palynology, plant taxonomy, remote sensing and image analysis, and spatial statistics.
- The specific skills required of a student and the acceptable level (in-depth advanced proficiency) of proficiency in each skill will be determined by the student's Supervisory Committee and documented on the [Skills Proficiency](#) form.
- Proficiency in more than two research skills may be required at the option of the student's Supervisory Committee.
- The research skills requirement must be completed before a student may take his or her qualifying examinations.

Dissertation and Manuscript Options

A manuscript option is available for Ph.D. students intending to publish their dissertation research in one or more peer reviewed journals.

- The manuscript option has all the same requirements as a dissertation, with the following additional guidelines:
 - **This option is only available at the discretion of the student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee**
 - The dissertation document should be written in the form of three *publishable* manuscripts targeted to specific journals, together with introduction and conclusion chapters.
 - Individual manuscripts must be closely related, and the introduction and conclusion chapters must explicitly identify the interrelated themes of the manuscripts and a future research agenda.
 - Publishable quality consists of two components: a) the content of the manuscript, and b) the style and presentation of the manuscript.
 - The targeted journal must be identified as a high quality outlet for the type of research conducted and must be approved by the student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee.
 - Publication of the document does not fulfill graduation requirements. The document must still be approved by the student's advisor and committee.
 - Publication is not required for completion of the degree requirements.
- **The Supervisory Committee is required to approve the selected option by signing the [Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form.**
- Any change in option must be approved by the committee and documented on the [Request to Change Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Option](#) form.

Dissertation Proposal

Ph.D. students must submit a dissertation or manuscript/dissertation proposal to their Supervisory Committee.

- The proposal should contain the following elements:
 - An introductory statement
 - A statement describing the goals of the research and the potential contributions of the research
 - An explicit statement of the hypothesis to be tested or problem to be solved

- A description of the methodology, including the steps in the research procedure, techniques that will be used, a timeline that includes deadlines for each step, and an assessment of data availability
- A bibliography of sufficient length to demonstrate that the student has acceptable background in his or her area of research
- Upon supervisory committee approval of the student's proposal, a digital copy of the proposal must be submitted along with the [Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form to the Department Graduate Secretary.

Colloquium Presentation

Ph.D. students are required to present their proposal in a colloquium presentation.

- **To schedule a colloquium presentation, students are required to have the following:**
 - A completed [Supervisory Committee](#) form
 - Permission from their advisor to schedule their colloquium.
- **Presentations are scheduled at the beginning of Fall and Spring semesters and the end of Spring semester.**
 - Once you have fulfilled the requirements listed above, contact the Colloquium Committee Chair to determine the next presentation date, and notify the Colloquium Committee Chair of your intention to present.
- The completed colloquium presentation is documented on the student's [Thesis/Technical Report/Dissertation Proposal Approval](#) form and must be completed before the student is allowed to register for Dissertation Research (GEOG 7970).

Qualifying Exams

- Written and oral examinations are required for each Ph.D. student.
- Written exam length is not recommended to exceed 20 hours in length.
- The written exam can be taken over a period of up to two weeks.
- Subject matter and format of the exams are selected in consultation with the student's Advisor and Supervisory Committee.
- Qualifying exams must be passed at least one semester before graduation.
- Qualifying exams may be repeated only once, and only at the discretion of the student's Supervisory Committee.

Checklist for ABD status

- The following items must be completed to apply for ABD status:
 - Completed and signed [Supervisory Committee](#) form
 - Dissertation proposal approved by entire supervisory committee
 - Completion of colloquium presentation
 - Completed and signed [Skills Proficiency](#) form
 - Approval of the student's [Program of Study](#) by the Supervisory Committee, Graduate Director, and Department Chair.
 - Passed qualifying examinations

Dissertation Guidelines

- A dissertation should contain the results of independent research and constitute a contribution to the knowledge and/or methodology within a student's field.
- A dissertation must reflect original work by the student and meet the formatting guidelines of the University
 - Approved reference styles can be found at <http://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis/department-approved-style-guides-2/>
- **A student's dissertation must be submitted to their Supervisory Committee at least 14 days prior to establishing a date for the student's dissertation defense.**
 - After the 14 day period, if all members of the Supervisory Committee are in agreement, a defense can be scheduled.
- Students are strongly encouraged to submit a dissertation draft to the Thesis Office for "preliminary review" before their defense.

- The manuscript will not be read at this time, but it will be examined for obvious formatting errors.
- Manuscripts are not given preliminary reviews by the Thesis Office after the student's defense.

Applying for Graduation

Students must complete an [Application for Graduate Degree](#) with the Registrar's Office, Graduation Division (window 15 Student Services Building) several months before their planned semester of graduation. Deadlines for submission are:

- Fall semester (December)—July 1st
- Spring semester (May)—November 1st
- Summer semester (August)—March 1st
- Applications will not be accepted more than one year in advance.

Dissertation Defense

The dissertation defense consists of a public presentation of the student's dissertation research, followed by a period for audience questions and a closed session for questions from the student's Supervisory Committee.

- By majority vote, the members of the Supervisory Committee must certify on the [Report of the Final Oral Examination for the Ph.D.](#) form that the student passed the examination and that the dissertation has been found satisfactory for the degree.
- The candidate must be enrolled in one course at the University of Utah during the semester of the dissertation defense.
 - Most students register for GEOG 7970 (Dissertation Research), or GEOG 7981 (Faculty Consultation) during the semester of their defense. GEOG 7981 does not count toward fulfillment of degree requirements.

Filing Your Dissertation

After making any changes to the dissertation that the student's Supervisory Committee may require after the dissertation defense, the student will then submit a one sided, hard copy of the thesis with the signed [Supervisory Committee Approval](#) form to the Department Chair for approval on the [Final Reading Approval](#) form. Students are responsible for printing their own documents.

- Chair's approval can take up to 10 business days.
- Following Chair's approval, students must submit the approved paper copy of the dissertation and the [Committee and Final Reading Approval](#) forms to the Thesis Office (302 Park Building) for format approval.
- **Students must submit their final dissertation to the Thesis Office within 4 months of their defense date.**
- Once formatting and all other requirements for graduation have been met, a Thesis Release is issued.
- All processing of the manuscript must be completed by the Thesis Editor's published deadline for graduation in that semester.

Financial Assistance

Departmental Financial Aid

Departmental awards are not automatically renewed and **ALL** eligible students must [apply](#) by January 20th of each year to be considered for funding for the following academic year.

- Teaching Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis according to Department needs and budget.
- Faculty with funded research projects have responsibility for selecting students for Research Assistant positions.
- Eligible teaching and research assistants qualify for tuition waivers and subsidized health insurance.
- Graduate Assistants are eligible for tuition waivers only.
- Tuition waivers do not cover credits beyond **12 (11 for RAs)** hours; lower division courses; recreation & leisure courses; health insurance premiums; international student surcharge; any special class fees; or differential tuition charged for courses (e.g. courses offered by City and Metropolitan Planning, the Business School, College of Engineering, or other programs).
- **Funded students are required to work 20 hours per week on departmental assignments.**
- By accepting aid, students agree not to work more than 10 hours per week outside of the Department.

- If you accept other work on campus, see the Department Administrative Officer to avoid potential problems with tuition benefit.
- Master's students can receive departmental assistance through teaching assistantships for up to 4 semesters.
- Ph.D. students can receive departmental assistance through teaching assistantships for up to 6 semesters.

Financial aid may be withdrawn for:

- Failing to maintain a 3.0 GPA
- Not fulfilling work obligations to Department or University standards
- Not making adequate progress toward a degree, as assessed by the student's Advisor, Supervisory Committee, and/or the Director of Graduate Studies
- Violations of University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Other Financial Aid

Graduate students are encouraged to seek out financial support from fellowships and grants. A partial list of programs available to students follows.

- Federal Work Study Grants
- University Graduate Research Fellowship
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and Dissertation Improvement Grant
- NASA Earth System Science Fellowship
- Fulbright Grant
- Marriner S. Eccles Fellowship
- Garr Cutler Energy Award
- Williams Memorial Graduate Fellowship
- Research Travel Assistance award from Graduate School
- ASUU Travel awards
- GTU Scholarships
- USGIF Scholarships
- ASPRS Scholarships

Residency and Tuition

Current tuition for non-resident students is more than triple the charge to resident students. Domestic students are encouraged to become residents as soon as possible to reduce their tuition liability.

- U.S. citizens **MUST** apply for Utah residency once 40 graduate credit hours are reached.
- Residency may be established if the student is a U.S. citizen with 40 credit hours taken as a graduate student, and does not maintain a residence elsewhere as demonstrated by the following evidence:
 - Utah voter registration
 - Utah driver's license
 - Employment in Utah
 - Payment of Utah income taxes
 - Utah bank account
- Resident tuition applies to all students under the following circumstances:
 - When the **ONLY** credit hours registered for are GEOG 6970, 6981, 7970, or 7981.
 - For funded students, hours taken above the maximum credit hours covered by tuition benefit (11 credit hours for Research Assistants, 12 credit hours for Teaching Assistants and Graduate Assistants).
 - Summer semester registration
- **International and other non-resident Research Assistants with more than 84 credit hours are responsible for the difference between the non-resident and resident tuition amount.**
- Further information on residency and application forms see <http://admissions.utah.edu/apply/residency/>

Student Participation and Professional Organizations

Graduate students are encouraged to constructively participate in departmental affairs through a number of avenues.

- SAC (Student Advisory Committee)

- Geography Week
- Faculty meeting representative
- Colloquium committee member
- RPT/TFR committee member
- Fund raising
- Social, sports and recreational activities
- Geography Club
- GTU (Gamma Theta Upsilon)

The department encourages all graduate students to participate in at least one professional organization. Some possibilities are:

- **Association of American Geographers (AAG) Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division**
 - Full-time students charged substantially reduced membership fees for AAG
 - Membership includes subscriptions to the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *The Professional Geographer*, *AAG Newsletter*, and access to *Jobs in Geography* job listings.
 - Students are encouraged to enter papers into student paper competitions and attend the regional and national conferences.
- **American Geophysical Union (AGU)**
 - Includes weekly journal *EOS* and monthly journal *Physics Today*.
 - Membership is very affordable for students (currently \$20 per year).
- **National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE)**
 - NCGE is dedicated to the improvement of Geographic education at all levels.
 - Student membership includes a subscription to the *Journal of Geography* and other benefits.
 - This organization is especially useful to pre-college schoolteachers.
- **American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing**
 - Student memberships are available to those interested in remote sensing, photo interpretation, and mapping.
- **Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU)**
 - GTU is a national honorary fraternity for Geographers
 - Members are eligible for scholarships (<http://www.gammathetaupsilon.org/scholarships.html>)
- **Western Regional Science Association**
 - Affiliated with the Regional Science Association International
 - Seeks the advancement of regional analysis and related spatial and aerial studies through multidisciplinary analysis.

Departmental Infrastructure

While the department staff is happy to assist you with your needs, please do not ask staff members to make exceptions to the following policies. Questions regarding individual programs should be directed to faculty advisors or the Director of Graduate Studies.

Department Space

- Graduate students may be provided with desk space within the Department.
- Desk space is assigned in the following priority, as space is available:
 - Students funded by the department
 - Students on fellowships
 - SAC leaders
 - Ph.D. students without funding
 - Master's students without funding
- Marriott Library has areas reserved for use by graduate students, if space is not available within the Department
- **Students are required to maintain their assigned space in a clean and sanitary manner.**
- If department staff or faculty find unsanitary or unsightly conditions within an assigned space, the student(s) assigned to that space will be responsible for correcting the problem.

- Issues related to safety or proper functioning of department infrastructure should be immediately reported to department staff.

Contact Information

- Provide the office with your local address, phone, and email.
- Advise the staff with your new contact information whenever it changes.
- Keep your information current in the Campus Information System
- Name change forms are available at: <http://registrar.utah.edu/pdf/name-change.pdf>

Keys

- Students must pay a \$5 refundable deposit per key.
- Graduate students may request a key to an assigned work station.
- If keys are lost, there will be an additional \$10 charge and the initial \$5 fee will not be refunded.
- Students are responsible for maintaining security by locking doors, reporting lost keys, and not loaning keys.

Office Equipment and Supplies

- Student computers and printers are located in Building 72 & Building 73.
- Computers and printers in the department office (Bldg. 73, Rm 217) are not for student use.
- Office supplies are available for instructional use only.
- Reserve laptops, cables, laser pointers, data projectors and sign them out. Return them immediately after use so that others may use this equipment.

Mail and Communication

- Please ask staff if you need to use the fax machine. You may be charged.
- Graduate students are assigned a mailbox in Bldg. 73, Rm 217. Please check it often. Access to mailboxes is limited to regular business hours.
- University guidelines do not allow students to use the department address for personal mail.
- Be sure to notify others when you leave the University so your mail doesn't continue to come to the department office.

Reserving Space

- Contact the office staff to reserve classroom or conference room space
- Use the Testing Center (<http://testingcenter.utah.edu>) for administering make-up tests

CSBS Computer Labs

- CSBS computer labs are listed here: <https://support.csbs.utah.edu/labs>.
- The college also has a "Virtual Lab" that can be logged into remotely.
- Printing costs are deducted from your UCard account.
- If classes are in session, you must leave the lab.
- Request extended hours access from a staff member.