

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

Geography and environment is the science of space, place, and environment. The department offers classes spanning the social and natural sciences, training students in qualitative, quantitative, spatial analysis and modeling, and laboratory methodologies. Human geographers study the spatial aspects of human activities, and physical geographers study patterns of climate, vegetation, landforms, land surface processes, soils, and water. Geographic tools and techniques — including Geographic Information Systems, remote sensing, and online and interactive mapping technologies — are among the most important for exploring and understanding our complex world. Geographic inquiry ranges from local to global scales. Geography and environment is an inherently interdisciplinary field and offers students skills to gain insights into pressing issues that the world faces. Geographic and environmental knowledge is highly valuable for policymakers. For example, how does climate change impact people's livelihood and health? How does globalization influence where your jeans are made? How can health disparities between people be overcome through policy change? By synthesizing this knowledge, geographers create unique understandings of our complex world.

Career opportunities for geographers are wide-ranging in the public, private, and nongovernmental sectors. Geographers work in the areas of social, health, and environmental policy; energy, transportation, economics, development, and tourism planning; urban and regional planning; research and education; community development; resource management; and environmental regulation and modeling.

With geography and environment, you can explore the world and find yourself.

Advising

All majors and minors have a primary academic advisor from the Academic Advising Program (<https://advising.unc.edu/>). Students are strongly encouraged to meet regularly with their advisor and review Tar Heel Tracker each semester. The department's director of undergraduate studies works with current and prospective majors by appointment and during regular office hours (see department website as hours will vary by semester). Departmental academic advising is highly recommended for all majors, in particular those considering graduate school. Further information on courses, undergraduate research opportunities, the honors program, careers, and graduate schools may be obtained from the department's Web site.

Facilities

The department has a range of specialized, state-of-the-art equipment for geospatial field sampling and laboratory analysis of data in hydrology, climatology, and vegetation science, including an ecohydrology laboratory, freshwater ecology and biogeochemistry laboratory, and a dendrology laboratory. The department is wired internally to support the latest network technology. This network links us to the centrally managed servers that provide access to a large library of software for geographic applications and research, as well as first-class library resources, data storage and backup, and access to supercomputing clusters.

Graduate School and Career Opportunities

There are a variety of job opportunities for geographers in government, business, industry, and the nonprofit sector. Geographers are hired for the following kinds of expertise: locational analysis, GISci, remote sensing, cartography, land use planning, recreation and tourism planning, and foreign area expertise. Many geographers pursue teaching at all levels.

Students with a B.A. major in geography and environment from UNC–Chapel Hill are well trained for graduate programs in geography and environment and other disciplines. Majors have entered graduate programs as diverse as city and regional planning, business, medicine, and ecology. For more information about careers in geography, the UNC–Chapel Hill Department of Geography and Environment, degree requirements, and connections to other sites of interest, visit the department's website (<http://geography.unc.edu>).

Major

- Geography and Environment Major, B.A. (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/geography-major-ba/>)

Minor

- Climate Change Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/climate-change-minor/>)
- Environmental Justice Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/environmental-justice-minor/>)
- Geography Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/geography-minor/>)
- Geographic Information Sciences Minor (<https://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/gis-minor/>)

Graduate Programs

- M.A. in Geography and Environment (<https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/geography/>)
- Ph.D. in Geography and Environment (<https://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/geography/>)

Courses

- Geography (GEOG) (<https://catalog.unc.edu/courses/geog/>)

Professors

Shorna Allred, Michael E. Emch, Banu P. Gokariksel, Clark Gray, Elizabeth Havice, Scott Kirsch, Charles E. Konrad, Elizabeth Olson, Diego Riveros-Iregui, Sara Smith, Conghe Song, Gabriela Valdivia, Erika Wise.

Associate Professors

Javier A. Arce-Nazario, Paul L. Delamater, Christian Lentz, Nina Martin, Aaron Moody, Chérie Rivers.

Assistant Professors

Amanda Gay DelVecchia, Maliheh Ghajargar, Ruth Matamoros-Mercado, Danielle Purifoy, Paul Taillie.

Research Professors

Richard E. Bilborrow, John Pickles, Stephen J. Walsh.

Research Associate Professor

Chris Fuhrmann.

Research Assistant Professors

Chao Wang, Qi Zhang.

Teaching Associate Professor

Jun Liang.

Teaching Assistant Professors

Julia Cardwell, Adrian Drummond-Cole, David Parr.

Professors Emeriti

Stephen Birdsall, John W. Florin, Wilbert M. Gesler, Richard J. Kopec, John Pickles, Stephen J. Walsh, Thomas Whitmore.

Contact Information

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