

The below curriculum outlines the requirements of the Geography PhD program. **Most classes are offered only once per year (Fall only or Spring only).** If students need to deviate from the below plan, contact a [SGSUP Graduate Advisor](#) to review options. Refer to the SGSUP Program Handbook for information regarding non-coursework degree requirements, including research, comprehensive exams, prospectus, and dissertation defense.

Year One

<i>Fall (7.0 credits)</i>	Credits
GCU 529 Contemporary Geographic Thought	3.0
GCU/GPH 591 Seminar: Geography Colloquium	1.0
Approved Graduate Elective	3.0
<i>Spring (7.0 credits)</i>	
GCU 585 Geographic Research Design and Proposal Writing	3.0
GCU/GPH 591 Seminar: Geography Colloquium	1.0
Approved Graduate Elective	3.0
Recommended minimum credits completed during first year	14.0

After the first year, PhD students have significant flexibility. Beginning in the second year, there are no requirements to enroll in specific courses each semester. Elective, methods, skills, specialization, and research credit may be taken in any semester at the student and faculty advisor's discretion.

Entering with master's degree

First Year Credits (<i>Above</i>)	14.0
Approved Methods or Statistics Courses	6.0
Approved Skills Courses	6.0
Approved Specialization Courses	9.0
Approved Graduate Electives or Research (<i>Remainder of Program</i>)	7.0
Credit Applied from Master's Degree	30.0
GCU/GPH 799 Dissertation	12.0
Total credits required for Geography PhD degree	84.0

Entering without master's degree

First Year Credits	14.0
Approved Methods or Statistics Courses	6.0
Approved Skills Courses	6.0
Approved Specialization Courses	9.0
Approved Graduate Electives or Research (<i>Remainder of Program</i>)	37.0
GCU/GPH 799 Dissertation	12.0
Total credits required for Geography PhD degree	84.0

Core Requirements

The listed classes are required and cannot be waived or substituted, with the exception of GCU 529. Submit the [Course Waiver](#) form to check for waiver eligibility. If approved, an alternative course must be selected. Students entering the program without a master's degree, who are planning on earning a master's degree in passing, should take GCU 529, which is a required course for the MA degree.

Electives

Any graduate level GCU, GIS, GPH, or PUP course may be taken as elective, including Research and Reading & Conference credits. Interdisciplinary courses may be taken but must be approved by the **faculty advisor**. Submit the [Petition for Transfer or Interdisciplinary Elective Courses](#) form to request approval. Courses approved for fulfilling the methods/statistics, skills, and specialization requirements may also be taken as electives, but can only count towards one or the other. **A maximum of six (6.0) credits of 400-level coursework may be included on the plan of study.**

Methods and Statistics Courses

Students must take six (6.0) credits of methods or statistics coursework. Students may choose from a pre-approved list or consult with their faculty advisor. To petition for a course not on the pre-approved list, submit the [Petition for Transfer or Interdisciplinary Elective Courses](#) form to request approval.

Skills Courses

Students must take six (6.0) credits of skills coursework. Students may choose from a pre-approved list or consult with their faculty advisor. To petition for a course not on the pre-approved list, submit the [Petition for Transfer or Interdisciplinary Elective Courses](#) form to request approval.

Specialization Courses

Students must take nine (9.0) credits of coursework related to their area of specialization. Students may choose from a pre-approved list or consult with their faculty advisor. To petition for a course not on the pre-approved list, submit the [Petition for Transfer or Interdisciplinary Elective Courses](#) form to request approval.

Master's Degree Credit

Thirty (30.0) credits from a previously awarded master's degree may be applied toward the doctoral plan of study. Contact a [SGSUP Graduate Advisor](#) for further information.

Master's Degree in Passing

Doctoral students can earn a Master of Arts (MA) in Geography en route to their PhD. Requirements consist of 30 credits of coursework already taken as part of the doctoral curriculum and completion of the Research Requirement. Students with 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree on their plan of study are not eligible. Contact a [SGSUP Graduate Advisor](#) for further information.

Dissertation

Dissertation credits may be taken in any combination that adds up to twelve (12.0) credits, but students are recommended to take them in the final year of the program. Students should consult with faculty advisor prior to enrolling in dissertation.

Time to Completion

The Geography PhD degree is designed to be completed in four years (entering with master's degree) or five years (entering without master's degree), with a minimum seven (7.0) credit hours taken per semester (on average; Fall and Spring enrollment only; may vary if entering without master's degree). Full-time enrollment for graduate students is nine (9.0) credits; Research and Teaching Assistants are considered full-time at six (6.0) credit hours.

Graduate Student Forms are available at

<https://sgsup.asu.edu/student-life/graduate-resources/graduate-student-forms>

Approved Methods/Statistics, Skills, and Specialization Course lists are available at

<https://sgsup.asu.edu/student-life/graduate-resources/plans-study-and-graduate-programs-handbook>