School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning
Arizona State University

Geographic Information Science PhD
Plan of Study
2023-2024

The below curriculum outlines the requirements of the Geographic Information Science 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

Fall *(7.0 credits)*	**Credits**
GIS 520 GIScience Issues and Debates	3.0
Approved Graduate Elective	3.0
GCU/GPH 591 Seminar: Geography Colloquium	1.0

Spring *(7.0 credits)*	
GCU 585 Geographic Research Design and Proposal Writing	3.0
GIS 571 Spatial Statistics for Geography and Planning	3.0
GCU/GPH 591 Seminar: Geography Colloquium	1.0
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, remote sensing, and research credit may be taken in any semester, at student and faculty advisor's discretion.

Entering with master's degree

First Year Credits (*Above*)	14.0
GIS 521 Geographic Information Science Programming	3.0
Approved Remote Sensing Course	3.0
Approved Graduate Electives or Research (*Remainder of Program*)	22.0
Credit Applied from Master's Degree	30.0
GIS 799 Dissertation	12.0
Total credits required for GIS PhD degree	**84.0**

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Entering without master's degree

First Year Credits	14.0
GIS 521 Geographic Information Science Programming	3.0
Approved Remote Sensing Course	3.0
Approved Graduate Electives or Research (*Remainder of Program*)	52.0
GIS 799 Dissertation	12.0
Total credits required for GIS PhD degree	**84.0**

Core Requirements

The listed classes are required and cannot be waived or substituted.

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 **Associate Director of Graduate Studies**. Submit the *Petition for Transfer or Interdisciplinary Elective Courses* form to request approval. Courses approved for fulfilling the remote sensing requirement 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**.

Remote Sensing Course

Students must take three (3.0) credits of remote sensing 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.

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.

Dissertation

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

Time to Completion

The GIS 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.

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Graduate Student Forms are available at
https://sgsup.asu.edu/student-life/graduate-resources/graduate-student-forms

Approved Remote Sensing Course list is available at
https://sgsup.asu.edu/student-life/graduate-resources/plans-study-and-graduate-programs-handbook