

# Master of Arts in Geography

## Why study geography?

The MA program develops a concentration in preparation for a career or further study. The student takes courses in several areas of the discipline, as well as at least three courses in an acceptable concentration. Our faculty are integral to graduate studies and have expertise in Human and Cultural Studies with a particular emphasis on Place, Economic Geography, Health and Diaspora, Environmental Policy, Borders and Border Conflicts, and more. Learn more about our faculty (<http://geog.ku.edu/faculty/>) on our website.

## Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (<https://catalog.ku.edu/archives/2024-25/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://catalog.ku.edu/archives/2024-25/liberal-arts-sciences/>) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

## Graduate Admission

Applicants without prior training in geography are welcome but are required to improve their basic knowledge of the broad divisions of geography: systematic, methodological, and regional. Courses taken to remedy deficiencies may not count toward graduate degrees.

The following items must be received to complete the application file:

1. **A completed Graduate Application Form** (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>) found on the Graduate Admission website.
2. **A current resume/CV.**
3. **A Statement of Interest and Goals.** This is included in the on-line application form. The Graduate Studies Committee places considerable importance on the thoughtfulness of your remarks – in particular, we are interested in learning about (1) your specific interests within geography or atmospheric science and why they are important and interesting to you, (2) what you envision as your educational and career objectives and how a degree from KU Geography & Atmospheric Science helps to meet those objectives, and (3) which of our faculty members you think would be an appropriate graduate advisor and mentor.
4. **A scanned copy of an official transcript** can be uploaded at the time of application. Official, degree conferred transcripts will be required prior to the second semester of study. NOTE: Documents uploaded with your application are not considered official. KU does not consider transcripts that come from applicants or that have been in the applicant's possession as official.

5. **Three confidential letters of recommendation** sent by referees who are familiar with your academic and/or professional activities and who can address your likelihood of success in graduate school.

If possible, we prefer letters from professors, but applicants returning to school after a lengthy absence may substitute letters from supervisors. Note that it is the responsibility of the applicant to request and to confirm that the required letters have been sent by the deadline. When using the on-line reference form to list references, you must include valid e-mail addresses. Once you have completed and submitted your application, your references will be contacted directly via email with directions for submitting their letters of recommendation.

\*\*Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are not required for the application. Applicants may choose to submit GRE scores if they feel it will help inform the department of their academic abilities. However, choosing not to submit scores will not affect your chances of admission.\*\*

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Non-native speakers of English must meet English proficiency requirements (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>).

## NON-DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS

Non-degree seeking students (NDS) are admitted on a rolling basis and must submit an application (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Applicants must include the materials below in their application.

1. Copy of official transcripts including proof of a bachelor's degree.
2. Proof of English proficiency, if it is a second language.
3. Statement of purpose and interests.

Submit your graduate application online (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). For questions, contact:

**The Graduate Program Coordinator**

## Geography M.A. Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses:		
GEOG 805	Perspectives in Geography	2
GEOG 980	Seminar in Geography: _____ (Colloquium for 1 credit hour during each of the first 2 semesters of residence at KU)	2
Orientation before classes begin in the fall semester (non-credit)		
Non-credit 8-hour Responsible Scholarship session held before classes start in the spring semester		
GEOG 899	Master's Thesis	6
One course from the Techniques/Research Methods Concentration:		3-4
GEOG 512	Advanced Cartography and Geovisualization	
GEOG 526	Remote Sensing of Environment I	
GEOG 528	Spatial Databases	
GEOG 558	Spatial Data Analysis	
GEOG 716	Advanced Geostatistics	
GEOG 875	Qualitative Research Methods	

Graduate Level coursework, chosen in consultation with an advisor. 6 17  
credit hours of which must be in the home department.

**Total Hours**

**30-31**

For elective course options, please review the 500 level or above Geography courses listed in the academic catalog (<https://catalog.ku.edu/archives/2024-25/liberal-arts-sciences/geography/#courseinventory>).

## **Proposal Defense**

The proposal defense should happen when the faculty advisor and the student agree that they have made enough progress and are ready to present their proposal to the entire committee. The proposal defense involves a presentation and a line of questioning from all committee members. The committee will be made up of at least 3 members in compliance with the Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy.

Two grades are possible for the proposal defense: "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory". If the student receives a grade of unsatisfactory, the defense may be repeated once on the recommendation of the advisory committee. If the student receives an unsatisfactory grade a second time, they will be recommended for dismissal from the program. A minimum of 90 days must pass before the defense may be redone.

## **Thesis Oral Defense**

The student must complete an oral defense of their thesis. The committee will be made up of at least 3 members in compliance with the Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy. A majority of the committee members must approve the defense with an assessment of "satisfactory", "unsatisfactory", or "honors". Students that fail the defense on their first attempt may repeat the defense at the recommendation of the degree program one more time. A minimum of 90 days must pass before the defense may be redone.

While completing degree requirements, graduate students are expected to understand and follow Office of Graduate Studies policies (<https://ogs.ku.edu/policies/>) relevant to their student status and academic standing.

## **Handbook for Graduate Students**

Detailed information on department regulations can be found in the Geography and Atmospheric Science Graduate Student Handbook.