

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

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Department of Geography and Planning (<http://www.wcupa.edu/geographyPlanning/>)

Dr. Coutu (gcoutu@wcupa.edu), *Chairperson and Graduate Coordinator - Geographic Information Systems Certificate*

Dr. Heckert (mheckert@wcupa.edu), *Graduate Coordinator - M.S. in Geography*

Dr. Kim (jkim@wcupa.edu), *Graduate Coordinator - Master of Urban and Regional Planning; Urban and Regional Planning Certificate*

Programs of Study

The Department offers two graduate degrees: a Master of Science in Geography and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning. The Master of Science in Geography is designed to develop skills and expertise in areas such as geospatial analysis, sustainability and environment, conservation of resources, and GIS analysis, including business and commercial applications. It also prepares students for entrance into Ph.D. programs in geography and in planning.

The Master of Urban and Regional Planning is a professional degree designed to prepare students for careers as professional planners or in related fields. The program is designed to develop skills and expertise in land use planning, economic development planning, and environmental planning. Geospatial analysis and techniques are integrated throughout the program. Students develop analytical and communication skills essential to a career in planning.

The department offers two certificate programs--one in urban and regional planning and the other in geographic information systems (GIS)--for students who desire specific programs of study but not a degree. The GIS Certificate is offered in a classroom-based format or online. The Certificate in Urban and Regional Planning may be combined with the core courses of the Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) to complete the M.P.A. degree. The latter is an interdisciplinary degree described under Master of Public Administration (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/business-public-management/public-policy-administration/master-public-administration-mpa/>).

Programs

Master's Programs

- M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/geography-ms/>)
- Master of Urban and Regional Planning (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/master-urban-regional-planning/>)

Certificates

- Geographic Information Systems (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/geographic-information-systems-certificate/>)
- Urban and Regional Planning (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/urban-regional-planning-certificate/>)

Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's

- B.S. in Business Management to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/business-management-bs/>)

- B.S. in Geography to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/geography-bs/>)
- B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies - Professional Concentration to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/university-college/interdisciplinary-academic-support-programs/interdisciplinary-studies-bs-professional/>)
- B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies - Professional Concentration to Master of Urban and Regional Planning (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/university-college/interdisciplinary-academic-support-programs/interdisciplinary-studies-bs-professional/>)
- B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies - STEM-H Concentration to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/university-college/interdisciplinary-academic-support-programs/interdisciplinary-studies-bs-stem-h/>)
- B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies - STEM-H Concentration to Master of Urban and Regional Planning (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/university-college/interdisciplinary-academic-support-programs/interdisciplinary-studies-bs-stem-h/>)
- B.S. in International Business to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/international-business-bs/>)
- B.S. in Marketing to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/marketing/marketing-bs/>)
- B.S. in Supply Chain Management to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/management/supply-chain-management-bs/>)
- B.S. in Urban and Environmental Planning to M.S. in Geography (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/urban-environmental-planning-bs/>)
- B.S. in Urban and Environmental Planning to Master of Urban and Regional Planning (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/business-public-management/geography-planning/urban-environmental-planning-bs/>)

Admissions

All applicants to one of West Chester University's graduate programs will be held to the graduate admissions requirements (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/general-information/admissions-enrollment/graduate-admissions/>). When applicable, additional requirements for admission into specific department program(s) may be listed below.

Admission to M.S. in Geography

Applicants should submit transcripts of all undergraduate work, two letters of recommendation, a resume that indicates relevant work experience, and a statement of career background and goals. GRE or other standardized scores are useful in the admission process but are not required. The department welcomes qualified applicants who have no previous background in geography, although additional preliminary or concurrent work may be required. Admission is based on department evaluation of course work taken for the baccalaureate degree and additional course work, if any, in combination with the other criteria above.

Admission to Certificate Programs

Students who want to enroll in a certificate program must hold a bachelor's degree (in any subject area) from an accredited institution and have an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 2.8. Interested students should complete the online Graduate School application available at www.wcupa.edu/grad (http://www.wcupa.edu/_INFORMATION/OFFICIAL.DOCUMENTS/)

GRADUATE.CATALOG/admissn.htm), and follow the instructions for the self-managed application process.

If a certificate student subsequently or simultaneously applies for and is accepted into the Master of Science degree program in geography, the geography courses taken for the certificate programs can be counted towards the degree.

Policies

All graduate students are held to the academic policies and procedures (<https://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/academic-policies-procedures/>) outlined in the graduate catalog. Students are encouraged to review departmental handbooks for program tips, suggested course sequences, and explanations of procedures. When applicable, additional policies for specific department programs may be listed below.

Faculty

Professors

Gary Coutu (gcoutu@wcupa.edu) (2005)
Chairperson, Geography and Planning
Graduate Coordinator, Geography and Planning
B.A., Duquesne University; M.S.P.M.P., Carnegie Mellon University;
Ph.D., Texas A&M University

Megan L. Heckert (mheckert@wcupa.edu) (2014)
Graduate Coordinator, Geography and Planning
B.S., Brown University; M.A., Ph.D., Temple University

Matin Katirai (mkatirai@wcupa.edu) (2009)
B.A., York University, Toronto; M.P.H., University of Kentucky
College of Public Health; Ph.D., University of Louisville

Associate Professors

Jongwoong Kim (jkim@wcupa.edu) (2019)
Graduate Coordinator, Geography and Planning
B.A., University of North Carolina; M.S., University of Michigan;
Ph.D., University of Cincinnati

Amy J Lynch (alynch@wcupa.edu) (2022)
B.S., North Carolina State; M.E.M., Duke University; Ph.D.,
University of Pennsylvania

Assistant Professors

Yingying Lyu (ylyu@wcupa.edu) (2022)
B.E., North China University; M.E., Tsinghua University; M.S.,
Ph.D., Harvard University

Carlos Morales-Ramirez (cmorales-ramirez@wcupa.edu) (2024)
Ph.D., Geography, National University of Singapore; M.A.,
Geography, West Chester University; M.S., Geography Education,
University of Oregon; B.A., Geography, University of Puerto Rico, Rio
Piedras Campus

Courses

GEO

GEO 502. Topical Seminar in Geography. 3 Credits.

Special topics in geography or planning not offered under existing, regularly offered courses. Repeatable for credit.

GEO 503. Seminar in Modern Geography. 3 Credits.

This course is intended to provide an introduction to the study of geography at the graduate level, with a focus on understanding various approaches to the discipline through the lens of a common theme: inequality and social justice. Over the course of the semester, students will also develop their own research ideas through completion of a comprehensive annotated bibliography and literature review on a topic of their choosing. Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 505. Planning Design. 3 Credits.

Methods and techniques of planning design. Presentation of statistical data in map form.

GEO 506. Seminar in Physical Geography. 3 Credits.

This course examines aspects of the physical environment that must be considered when planning any site for urban, industrial, or suburban activity.

GEO 507. Internet Applications of Geographic Information Systems. 3 Credits.

The course examines the principles and applications of web-based and mobile geographic information systems (GIS). Internet map services, navigation/GPS systems and cell -phone based applications are examined through the use of ArcGIS Internet map Server, Google Earth, Google APIs and cell phone applications. Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 509. Quantitative Methods in Planning/Geography. 3 Credits.

Fundamental statistics, methods, and techniques applied to geographic research and decision making, such as urban and regional planning.

GEO 521. Suburbanization and Land Development. 3 Credits.

Component systems and functional operations of urban/suburban communities, including ecological and demographic aspects. Emphasis on organization, development, change, and problems of communities.

GEO 524. Population Processes. 3 Credits.

Characteristics and distribution of world populations are studied. The dynamic processes of population change (mortality, fertility, and migration) are examined.

GEO 525. Urban and Regional Planning. 3 Credits.

Application of community-planning theories and methods to designated urban and regional systems.

GEO 526. Metropolitan Systems and Problems. 3 Credits.

Urbanization processes and problems; urban systems in the expanding metropolitan and regional setting; present and proposed efforts to solve urban problems.

GEO 531. Transportation Planning. 3 Credits.

Transportation issues that face today's planners are studied and various means of analysis demonstrated. Computer assignments use EMME/2 package.

GEO 534. Geographic Information Systems. 3 Credits.

The common principles and concepts of Geographic Information Systems; examination of the theory and tools of spatial data analysis through specific applications. Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 538. Environmental Modeling with Geographic Information Systems. 3 Credits.

This course reviews the principles of geodatabase development and use in geographic information systems (GIS). It is a study of how GIS software is used to enhance decision-making process through advanced database operation. The course includes an in-depth exploration of database design and management techniques. The process of creating information models of real world processes is examined through the development of a geodatabase. These data will then be spatially examined and manipulated to review the process of database development and decision-making. Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 544. Geography of Latin America. 3 Credits.

Regional geography of Latin America: its physical base, settlement, agriculture, demography, and manufacturing.

GEO 554. Geography and Planning of Housing. 3 Credits.

This course provides an overview of the spatial, economic, social, physical and political forces that structure and affect current housing conditions and prospects. This course introduces key concepts and institutions that influence the production, distribution, maintenance and location of housing. The Philadelphia metropolitan area is emphasized as a case study for understanding the implications of present housing geography trends for the future, as well as the development of rational housing policies and plans.

GEO 556. Introduction to Business GIS. 3 Credits.

This course makes use of large datasets and GIS in analytical studies and strategic decision-making in the commercial sector, involving store location, geodemographics and marketing information. Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 572. Seminar in Resource Management. 3 Credits.

Applied research problem solving for resource management and environmental issues designed for an individual student or team-study basis. Repeatable for credit.

GEO 577. Geodatabases. 3 Credits.

This course reviews the principles of geodatabase development and use in GIS. It is also a study of how GIS software is used to enhance the decision making process through advanced database operations. Using ESRI's ArcGIS software, students will add demographic, environmental, political, economic, and other types of data to GIS applications. These data will then be spatially examined and manipulated to review the process of database development and decision making.

Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 584. Applications of Geographic Information Systems. 3 Credits.

This course builds on GEO 534, expands upon important technical concepts in greater detail, and explores a range of GIS application areas.

GEO 584 Prerequisite: Successful completion of GEO 534 with minimum grade of C-.

Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 585. Geography Field Methods. 3 Credits.

An advanced field course that includes urban and land-use studies. Use of field methods, mapping, and data collection for geographical reports.

Distance education offering may be available.

GEO 600. Independent Research in Geography. 3 Credits.

Research projects, reports, and readings in geography.

Repeatable for credit.

GEO 610. Thesis in Geography. 3-6 Credits.

A thesis is developed on a research problem for which the student formulates a theory, proposition or hypothesis, and investigates available information on the subject.

Repeatable for credit.

GEO 615. Internship in Urban and Regional Planning. 3-6 Credits.

On-the-job experience in the application of theory, execution of substantive research, and provision of service with professional agencies at selected off-campus locations.

Repeatable for credit.

PLN**PLN 505. Planning Design (Studio A). 3 Credits.**

Selected experiences designed to assist the student (either as an individual or as a member of a group) to understand the fundamental knowledge and technical skills used by urban planners to research, analyze, create and implement plans and projects in the built environment.

PLN 508. Qualitative Methods and Community Engagement Techniques. 3 Credits.

This course focuses on qualitative methods and citizen engagement techniques in the planning process. Topics include citizen participation, social justice, governance and working with under-represented populations. Student learn how to apply and analyze a range of qualitative techniques including community surveys, key person interviews, and focus groups. Students learn how to structure a public meeting and about techniques planners use to bring meaningful and representative citizen participation into community decision-making.

PLN 525. Planning History, Theory and Ethics. 3 Credits.

This course examines current planning theories including comprehensive, incremental, advocacy, equity, radical, communicative and just city approaches to planning. The course will examine several facets of planning theory including the role of planning within a democratic society, how planning influences society and society values, new directions within the field, and finally the relationship between planning theory and planning practice. As a result, it will enable students to critically examine the purpose and contribution of planning within society as well as the role of the planner including the issue of planning ethics, professional standards and conduct.

Distance education offering may be available.

PLN 527. Planning Law and Organization. 3 Credits.

An insight into the role of federal, state, and local governments in instituting, executing, and judicially reviewing laws and regulations pertaining to land uses. Emphasis on the legal organization of the planning process, particularly at the local level. Major land-use court cases are presented and reviewed.

PLN 528. Economic Development Planning. 3 Credits.

The course will explore the global and national context in which local economies operate, providing a perspective and rationale for how to design economic development strategies at a local level (community, local municipality, city, and state). The class begins with an examination of larger-scale economic principles and a look at the history of economic development patterns in the US, focusing on barriers to development for places and people, and the role of the local public sector in generating jobs, employment, and tax base.

Distance education offering may be available.

PLN 536. Environmental Planning. 3 Credits.

In-depth instruction on the concepts and tools of environmental planning which include landscape form and function in planning. Applications to local and regional issues are stressed.

PLN 605. Planning Design (Studio B). 3 Credits.

Selected experiences designed to assist the student (either as an individual or as a member of a group) in developing proficiency in applied planning techniques including site analysis and development design.

PLN 605 Prerequisite: Successful completion of PLN 505, with a minimum grade of C-.

Repeatable for credit.