UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

WHY GEOGRAPHY?

Geographers research and engage the world. Geographers assert the importance of space, environment, context, location, place, and scale in relation to societies’ most pressing environmental and social concerns. We draw from interdisciplinary theories across the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences to consider how these concerns are mapped, represented, and understood in a changing world, and to offer theoretically informed and empirically based responses. Our students are deeply engaged in community service through internships, service learning, and senior projects, which center upon questions of environmental and social justice. Our undergraduate majors employ social and political theories; develop the ability to create and analyze maps and other forms of geo-visualization; gather, analyze and interpret quantitative and qualitative data; and write clear and compelling research reports and papers. Our annual undergraduate research symposium features undergraduate research projects conducted by individuals and research teams. Our undergraduate research journal, Plenum, publishes outstanding undergraduate research articles.

UNDERGRADUATES

Geography is more than place names! Geographers address some of the world's most urgent challenges, asking such questions as: Is the environment bad for your health? Who works where and how did they get their jobs? Who grows your food? How does globalization affect you? How do businesses make location decisions? How is identity linked to where people live and work? Can growth be managed? Is there a geography of inequality? Are maps political? What can we do about the traffic mess? Answers to such questions are complex and not “fixable” by one-dimensional solutions. Geography's contribution to these public issues and solutions is spatial analysis and accountability to place. We study the locations of things and people and the processes that brought them there. In all of our work we hold ourselves accountable to the things and the people in our community.

In geography classes you will learn how to conduct interviews, use statistical and demographic analysis, and interpret data in order to construct models, maps, and other tools for understanding. In addition to providing our students with the analytical tools and habits of mind to assess these problems, we also encourage our students to combine classroom study with internships, community service, apprenticeships, and independent research to develop an integrated learning experience. This learning experience not only provides students with critical and analytical skills, but also offers a sense of hope that these daunting problems can be solved and that individuals can make a difference.

EXPLORE

Find out how to minor or major in geography, or how to apply to the honors program by exploring our undergraduate section.