



## Thinking about a **GEOGRAPHY DEGREE?**

### Information about the Geography Department at UMW

Geography is the study of the interaction between people and their environments, both human-made and natural. Geographers examine the places and regions resulting from such interaction and analyze the spatial characteristics of all manner of cultural, economic, political, and physical processes and relationships.

Within the context of a liberal arts education, the Geography Department at UMW encourages students to take multidisciplinary approaches to understanding and working within the human and environmental processes and patterns that make up our world. At the same time, students learn valuable communications and technical skills applicable to wide range of careers.

Geography encompasses many different areas of study. At UMW, Geography majors take classes that concentrate on cultural, political, economic, and physical aspects of places across the globe. We learn how humans interact with their environment. Maps are one tool that geographers use to study this interaction, but geography itself is not the study of maps.

UMW geography majors have gone on to a wide variety of careers. These jobs include teaching, working for GIS and mapping companies, consulting and engineering firms, as well as numerous non-profit and government organizations. Majoring in geography prepares graduates for work in many different areas, as students have experience studying both the human and physical dimensions of the world. Many graduates also choose to continue their education in graduate schools, studying everything from meteorology to political geography.

**The Geography Department offers a wide range of courses for both majors and non-majors. These are organized into three areas of emphasis:**

*Community, Development, and Culture:* A focus on how people living in specific places and regions experience and affect social, cultural, economic, and environmental processes. Includes courses in planning and urban geography, local development, race and place, human-environment relationships, and regional geographies.

*Globalization:* A focus on the geographies of globalization and their political, cultural, and economic dimensions. Includes courses in geopolitics, economic and cultural globalization, international development, migration, and regional geographies.

*Nature and Society:* A focus on the physical and social processes that shape the natural environment and affect human life. Includes courses in landforms, climatology, human-environment relationships and regional geographies.

We also offer a **Certificate in Geographic Information Science (GIS)** and minors in **Urban Studies, Climate Science, Latin American Studies and Middle East Studies.**

The Department of Geography provides students and faculty with a wide range of facilities and equipment to support course work, student and faculty research, and the production of maps used for teaching and publication. Our facilities include:

- A fully-equipped multi-faceted GIS & cartography laboratory with dual monitors, modern work stations & extensive software
- Classrooms with state-of-the-art audio-visual facilities, computer equipment, and maps
- Dedicated laboratory for teaching physical geography, geographic techniques, and field methods
- Physical geography prep room and equipment storage (weather, surveying, soil analysis, etc.)
- Fully equipped pollen analysis lab: hood, positive-pressure HEPA lab air-flow system, centrifuge, water deionization system, microscope, camera, and visualization software
- An extensive collection of maps and remotely sensed imagery

The Department's ten full-time faculty are actively engaged in research in political geography, geography and social justice, geomorphology, biogeography, historical geography, heritage tourism, and critical cartography. Recent publications include books and book chapters with the University of Minnesota Press, Temple University Press, and Ashgate Publishers. Journal articles by faculty appear in the Annals of the American Association of Geographers, Urban Geography, Cultural Geography, the Geographical Review, Sustainability, Progress in Human Geography, Social and Cultural Geography, the Southeastern Geographer, and Iranian Studies.

The Geography Department believes that it is important to give students the opportunity to put the knowledge they gain in the classroom to use in the real world. We therefore encourage students to work with faculty members in developing individual research projects. In the past, students have pursued topics around Virginia, across the country, and internationally. Excellent students with individual research interests are encouraged to complete an honors thesis.

Geography students have received funding from Mary Washington's Undergraduate Research Grants program to support a variety of research projects. Students develop a project in consultation with a faculty member and prepare a grant proposal. In the last several years, a number of students have received substantial funding from the college to pursue independent research. The **Rountree Endowment for Geography** provides additional resources to promote the mission of the Department, including student research-related travel, GIS and physical laboratories, local and international field courses, and other student-oriented projects.

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## Where do UMW Geography majors end up?

### Internship Opportunities:

- City of Fredericksburg
- George Washington Regional Commission
- Friends of the Rappahannock
- Smithsonian Institution
- Next Tier Concepts
- Marstel-Day, LLC
- Stafford County
- US Geological Survey

### Graduate Programs:

- George Washington University
- Ohio University
- Rutgers University
- Texas A & M University
- University of Denver
- University of South Carolina
- University of North Carolina
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Tech
- University of Tennessee
- University of Kentucky

### Representative Employers:

- City/County/State Planning
- Federal Intelligence Agencies
- Federal Research Agencies
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Environmental / Engineering / Architectural Consultation Firms
- Healthcare planning consultants
- Manufacturing firms
- National, State and Local Parks
- Environmental Organizations
- Public Schools
- State & Federal Offices



More information can be found at <https://cas.umw.edu/geography/>

Contact Dr. Jackie Gallagher, [jgallagh@umw.edu](mailto:jgallagh@umw.edu) (540-654-1493) to arrange a visit; we are located on the 3rd floor of Monroe Hall