Explore more majors
Geography

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College of Liberal Arts
Degree Type(s)
B.A., B.S.
Link to major's website
B.A. Degree Requirements
B.S. Degree Requirements
Minor Available

When you study geography at the U of M, you’ll explore our globalizing world and the ways in which both human and non-human forces shape it. This major is a great way to study combinations of social, political, economic, and ecological processes. The geography major goes a step further than studying these processes and aims to process how these phenomena are perceived and what meanings they hold. Our B.S. degree offers a greater emphasis on quantitative analysis while our B.A. focuses more on qualitative analysis, but students can tailor their programs to meet their needs and goals.

The College of Liberal Arts Advantage: More Than a Major
When you study Geography at the University of Minnesota, you gain the added advantage of a College of Liberal Arts education. At CLA, the liberal arts mean you get more than just a degree in one major or another; it means you will be exposed to different areas of study, to different ways of thinking and learning. In fact, the liberal arts teach you how to learn—how to ask the right questions, how to problem solve, and how to innovate. The liberal arts prepare students for the complexities of our world, because here at CLA you will study not just, say, politics or art but also where politics and art intersect, where science and ethics intersect, where economics and the environment intersect.

Meet Our Students
Associate Professor Kurt Kipfmueller’s students Cait Bell, Suzanne Scotty, and Madison Pettersen are getting a deep dive in research practices and skills. They analyze tree rings to discover how humans shaped an ecosystem and to track an invasive species.

Read more about Cait, Suzanne, and Madison's story.

The Gullah/Geechee Nation has a unique, centuries-old American culture that is under threat. Geography undergraduates Erin Jones and Karah VueBenson traveled to visit Gullah/Geechee people face-to-face to learn from them about their struggles and how collaborative scholarship can contribute to their efforts to protect their land.

Read more about Erin and Karah's story.

Student Experiences
Learning Abroad: Prepare to Lead in a Global Economy

Learn more about study abroad for Geography majors.

Undergraduate Research: Turn Curiosity into New Knowledge

Many of our students participate in ongoing research projects with University faculty or work with a faculty mentor to develop a project of their own. GES faculty enjoy working with undergraduates, but your opportunities are not limited to GES faculty. Talk with your instructors, advisors, and your peers to identify any University faculty member working in an area that interests you! Our students work with social scientists and historians, and they conduct scientific research in laboratories and in the field. Whether within CLA or at the Medical School, CFANS, CBS, the Institute on the Environment, or the Population Center, there are important questions waiting for you!

Student Organizations: Find Friends and Grow as a Leader

- GEOGophers
- GIS Student Organization
- University of Minnesota Geography Students (UMGS)

Internships: Gain Valuable Experience in the Twin Cities and Beyond

Did you know? CLA Career Services has its very own internship reflection course! Students taking an internship can use this course to reflect on ways that their work experience is preparing them for successful careers - and receive credit for the work.

Meet Our Faculty
How do you find meaning in movement? Movement and change are an essential part of life. Assistant Professor Somayeh Dodge works to understand why and how organisms move and migrate.

Read more about Professor Dodge's work.

Meet Our Alumni

CLA Graduates: Successful Careers and Purposeful Lives

CLA graduates succeed in many different careers — law, health care, medicine, business, government, teaching, advertising, arts and entertainment, international relations, and more — precisely because they understand how to navigate a complex and interconnected world. As our alumni explain below, “Being a good employee means being curious, and continuing to evolve, and learn, and educate yourself, and I can think of no stronger foundation for doing that than a liberal arts education.

“An education in the liberal arts is a springboard to lifelong career success”
-- Dean John Coleman
You might also explore

Urban and Community Forestry Minor
Civil Engineering
Geoengineering
American Studies
Forest and Natural Resource Management
Urban Studies

Associated Careers

Civil Engineers, Geographers, Geographic Specialists, Postsecondary Teachers, Urban and Regional Planners

Admission Information

FRESHMAN: Admission information

TRANSFER STUDENTS: Requirements for the College of Liberal Arts
Beyond admission, if you have questions about transferring, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) has transfer advisors to help. Please feel free to contact them about any of the topics below:

- Course plans before transferring
- Estimated time to graduation
- Career preparation in CLA
- Getting ready for orientation, if admitted
- Connecting with major/minor departments