

# Program Plans: Outcomes and Assessment Methods



MS Plan 2019-20

## Program (CAS) - GEOG - Geography (MS) - 110

**Program Mission Statement:** The M.S. program in Geography specialize in three broad areas including nature-society dynamics, cultural-historical geography, and geographic information science including unmanned aerial systems (UAS). This degree program is designed for students to master the theoretical knowledge and skills to design, implement, and present original geographic research in oral and written form. Therefore, master's students study geographic research methods and analysis, the history and philosophies of geography, and knowledge of current geographic research.

### Outcome: Effective Communications

MS students will develop the ability to communicate geographic information effectively orally and in writing.

**Outcome Status:** Active

**Planned Assessment Year:** 2017 - 2018, 2018 - 2019, 2019 - 2020

**Outcome Type:** Skills

#### Assessment Methods

**Analysis of Written Artifacts** - All students undergoing a defense of some sort are assessed on their writing and oral presentation skills by all committee members (typically three faculty members on an MS committee). Rubrics are distributed to the committee members before the defense and are usually collected afterwards, although some faculty members return them later.

As to the other component of assessment, all instructors of graduate-level courses are requested to provide all Geography student papers from one of their assignments, usually a term paper or project, for evaluation by paid summer artifact readers. These readers have both assessed artifacts in the past, and were given general instructions on the assessment of the artifacts. Instructors were not aware of any identifying student information, including level (MS or PhD), to avoid bias, although the readers were also contributors of some artifacts so likely recognized their courses and their students via their writing. (Active)

\* **Learning Outcome Goal/Benchmark:** Students will average 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale).

**Timeline for Assessment:** Each Semester

**Related Documents:**

[E written communication skills rubric final.pdf](#)

**Oral Presentation** - All students undergoing a defense of some sort are assessed on their oral presentation skills by all committee members (typically three on an MS committee). Rubrics are distributed to the committee members before the defense and are usually collected afterwards, although some faculty members return them later. (Active)

\* **Learning Outcome Goal/Benchmark:** Students will average 2.2 or better (on a 3.0 scale).

**Timeline for Assessment:** Every semester

**Related Documents:**

[J oral communication skills rubric.pdf](#)

### Outcome: Geographic Knowledge

MS students will develop apposite knowledge in geographic literature and research.

**Outcome Status:** Active

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**Planned Assessment Year:** 2017 - 2018, 2018 - 2019, 2019 - 2020

**Outcome Type:** Knowledge

## Assessment Methods

**Course Embedded Assignments** - Instructors of the respective courses assess their students on rubrics specific to the course, designed by them (5403 – Rubric B, 5413 – Rubric C; see departmental Graduate Assessment Plan). Instructors are provided with a copy of the rubric and instructions early in the semester, and are left to complete it at their leisure (either as the semester progresses or at the end) but are urged to separate student grades from achievements of specific benchmarks as indicated on the rubric. (Active)

\* **Learning Outcome Goal/Benchmark:** Students will average 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale).

**Timeline for Assessment:** Yearly

**Related Documents:**

[B 5403 rubric.doc](#)

[C 5413 Rubric.doc](#)

## Outcome: Geographic Skills

MS students will develop skills in tools for geographic data collection and methods of analysis.

**Outcome Status:** Active

**Planned Assessment Year:** 2017 - 2018, 2018 - 2019, 2019 - 2020

**Outcome Type:** Skills

## Assessment Methods

**Course Embedded Assignments** - Instructors of the respective courses assess their students on rubrics specific to the course, designed by them (5303 – Rubric A, 6313 – Rubric D; see departmental Graduate Assessment Plan). Instructors are provided with a copy of the rubric and instructions early in the semester, and are left to complete it at their leisure (either as the semester progresses or at the end) but are urged to separate student grades from achievements of specific benchmarks as indicated on the rubric. (Active)

\* **Learning Outcome Goal/Benchmark:** Students will average 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).

**Timeline for Assessment:** Yearly for GEOG 5303

Every other year for GEOG 6313

**Related Documents:**

[A 5303 Rubric.doc](#)

[D 6313 Rubric.doc](#)

## Outcome: Geographic Research

MS students will develop geographic creative components or theses that marshal evidence, analyze data, and synthesize meaningful conclusions.

**Outcome Status:** Active

**Planned Assessment Year:** 2017 - 2018, 2018 - 2019, 2019 - 2020

**Outcome Type:** Skills

## Assessment Methods

**Review of Thesis/Dissertation/Creative Component** - All students undergoing a final defense are assessed on their research and writing skills by all committee members (typically three faculty members on an MS committee). Rubrics are distributed to the committee members at the beginning of the defense and are usually collected afterwards, although some faculty members return them later. (Active)

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\* **Learning Outcome Goal/Benchmark:** Students will average 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale).

**Timeline for Assessment:** Each Semester

**Related Documents:**

[F research skills CREATIVE COMPONENT rubric\\_final 2010.pdf](#)

[G masters research skills rubric\\_final 2010.pdf](#)