

# UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY GRADUATE HANDBOOK

This Version from 29 July 2024<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Change Log. Sections II.C.1 and II.D.1 updates to language around course requirements and Section IV.B.1 (Action Plan and Review Following No Progress Toward Ph.D.) added and approved 24 April 2024. Section II.F. (GEO 741 Requirement) added March 21, 2022. Section I.I (Defense Modalities and Expectations) added March 30, 2023.

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*Students bear full and sole responsibility for understanding and abiding by the regulations and procedures required to attain a graduate degree in Geography.*

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

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This handbook is designed to assist students in successfully completing their degrees. The two primary documents relevant to successfully completing a graduate degree in Geography are this handbook and the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>).

### A. Departmental Policies

Graduate students are governed by rules and regulations of the Department of Geography, the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University of Kentucky. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in the Department is your official liaison for all questions relevant to your degree progress. **When in doubt consult with the DGS.**

There are “checklists” for the MA and PhD degrees in Geography included at the end of this handbook which can serve as a general guide to your progress. We suggest that you copy the checklist relevant to your degree and keep it handy throughout your academic tenure at the University of Kentucky. We also suggest that you browse the Department website (<http://geography.as.uky.edu>) and the Graduate School website (<http://gradschool.uky.edu>), at least, in order to become familiar with institutional structures, organization, and requirements. A curation of some of the most relevant rules and regulations for Geography graduate students is available at <https://geography.as.uky.edu/geography-graduate-handbook>.

Sometimes situations arise that are not fully covered by the information in this handbook. In these cases, students should consult with their adviser or the DGS or the Chair (ideally in that order). Students with concerns about their interactions with their advisor, other faculty or graduate students (within or outside the Department), undergraduate students and/or staff members should contact the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chair (as appropriate). If neither of these persons are appropriate, students should contact the College of Arts and Science’s Associate Dean for Graduate Programs (<https://www.as.uky.edu/deans-office>). Students might also seek guidance and advice from the Academic Ombudsman (<http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/>).

Particularly complex issues that involve multiple university bureaucracies and offices (e.g., the Graduate School, the Registrar, Office of Sponsored Research, etc.) are best guided by the departmental institutional knowledge on how to negotiate the systems most efficiently. **When in doubt consult with the DGS.**

### B. Inclusivity statement<sup>2</sup>

The University of Kentucky Department of Geography is committed to providing an open,

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<sup>2</sup> Our statement is inspired from the work of other scholars and departments whose diversity, inclusion, equality, and/or climate statements we have drawn on liberally in writing our own statement. We cite and thank the following departments for their beautiful and important statements that made our own possible. All of these sites were last accessed on March 12, 2020. (1) Princeton University Department of Chemistry

accessible, and supportive learning climate. We understand that each member of the community (students, faculty, postdocs, and staff) have distinct but equally important roles. As a community, we respect the humanity, dignity, individuality, and freedom of each member, and their distinct contributions to our community. We strive to be a place where individuals and groups learn with and from each other, and we acknowledge that learning may sometimes--if not often--be difficult and uncomfortable. Acceptance flows from a common ground, based on a belief in the acceptance of individuals as human beings. Acceptance of the person is different from acceptance of their viewpoint/agenda. This includes the belief in people's ability to determine who they shall become (self-determination), their protection from injury, affordance of their equality of opportunity (e.g., access to education, healthcare, food, housing and information about their basic rights), protection of their privacy and well-being, and acknowledgement for their work, through recognition or economic compensation.

The Department of Geography is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation for every person. Every person includes faculty, staff, postdocs, and students, regardless of background including, but not limited to, physical ability, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, political views, religious beliefs, creed, national origin, citizenship, religion and/or spirituality, sexual orientation, gender identity, size, intellectual acuity, level of knowledge, family status, and technological ability. We aim to foster a sense of shared experience and common purpose for everyone in the department, along with a collective responsibility for each other's well-being and for the well-being of the department as a whole. Academic rigor and intellectual exchange of ideas are integral parts of development as scholars. All exchanges amongst members of the department are to be conducted in a respectful manner and with understanding of the diverse backgrounds within the community. We also recognize that respect takes time, initiative, and patience, and exceeds the work of politeness to attain actual understanding whenever possible. Further, the Department is a space where we see difference as central to informing our research process, and our goal is to work openly to understand our own unique identities, experiences, and viewpoints in order to grow not only individually but collectively.

We recognize that our department is stronger with people who have different perspectives and offer creative problem-solving strategies. As a department, we engage in a mission to promote a research and learning environment that is welcoming to all. We seek to improve inclusion within our community and to provide a welcoming atmosphere for new students, faculty, postdocs, and staff. We recognize that the field of geography has a special role in the academy in its study of space, place, and environment. We recognize that geography is historically bound to colonial aims and intentions and is still tied to and upholds imperialism, racism, cis-heteropatriarchy, and ableism today, among other sorts of violence. Therefore, it is our responsibility as geographers to uproot these inequalities on behalf of social justice.

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<https://chemistry.princeton.edu/diversity-statement> (2) Berea College <https://www.berea.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/> (3) UC Berkeley Department of Economics <https://www.econ.berkeley.edu/content/climate-equity-diversity-and-inclusion> (4) Kent University iSchool <https://www.kent.edu/iSchool/diversity-inclusion-statement> (5) UMass Geosciences <http://www.geo.umass.edu/diversity-and-inclusion> and (6) Brown University Department of Sociology <https://www.brown.edu/academics/sociology/diversity-statement>

The Department aims to extend to each member of the community the resources necessary to achieve the highest levels of distinction in their work and scholarship. While all members of our community are responsible for achieving these goals, we understand that power is embedded in the academy and those of us who possess it must use this power to create an inclusive community. The Department commits to always work to facilitate a new generation of ideas and leaders within the discipline, to sustain the highest level of research and teaching possible, and to cultivate discourse among diverse parties both within and beyond our classrooms, conferences, and publications.

These goals and values echo statements from University of Kentucky campus-wide efforts. In the following webpages you will find information and resources that support these efforts.

- Code of Conduct - <https://www.uky.edu/legal/ethical-principles-and-code-conduct>
- Basic Needs and Services - <https://www.uky.edu/deanofstudents/needs>
- Institutional Diversity - <https://www.uky.edu/inclusiveexcellence/>
- Responding to Harassment & Discrimination - <https://www.uky.edu/eo/discrimination-harassment>
- Resources for Mental Health [https://www.uky.edu/president/mental\\_health\\_resources](https://www.uky.edu/president/mental_health_resources)

### C. Student Advising

The Department's graduate program is designed to facilitate close collaboration among faculty and students with shared areas of interest. Consistent with this philosophy, each student will select a professor who will consent to act as their major advisor. The advisor's role is to:

- Maintain regular communication with students to ensure that they are receiving necessary input about the program, are aware of key steps and deadlines and monitor progress via GPA and other measures of student's performance.
- Serve as an intellectual mentor during the student's tenure in the Department.
- Advise on matters such as course selection, proposal design, grant writing, conducting research.
- Advise students about the larger professional community (conferences, workshops, etc.) and mentor students about opportunities, professional expectations and norms as they enter the profession.
- Provide timely feedback on work (generally within two weeks) within a mutually agreed timetable and deadlines.
- Assist the graduate student with any problems that may arise in their academic program.

Students are expected to consult regularly with their advisor about courses and research plans and keep them updated on their progress at least once a semester (although in practice this occurs more frequently). Students are also expected to work with advisors on setting timelines and due dates to meet degree deadlines and maintain timely progress towards their degree.

It is important to recognize that people have different relationship styles and faculty have

different styles and approaches to advising. As a result, there is a diversity of models for how the student-advisory professional relation functions. In order to help ensure a successful relationship, it is useful for students to discuss the following points with their potential advisor before entering into an advising relationship. How quickly can you expect your advisor to respond to written submissions turned in on time? What happens if you miss a deadline? How quickly can you expect your advisor to respond to requests to schedule meetings or conversations? How regularly does your advisor like to meet? How often would your advisor like a written report of your progress along degree milestones? What format should this report take? It is the department's expectation that advisors (and committee members) will provide timely feedback (generally within two weeks) to students on proposal drafts, reading lists and related work relevant to students' degrees. It is also important to recognize the competing obligations and pressures facing advisors. For example, a student missing an agreed upon deadline can result in a slower response as a faculty member may no longer have the same availability due to other commitments.

The DGS typically acts as temporary advisor for first-year students until each selects an advisor. M.A. students should select an advisor during their first semester and Ph.D. students should select an advisor by their second semester in residence (although earlier is better). In all cases, advisor assignment is contingent upon agreement by both parties. Any member of the graduate faculty may advise MA students. As a rule, Ph.D. advising is a privilege of full graduate faculty membership (generally limited to associate and full professors).

Switching advisors can be very disruptive to a student's academic progress and is generally not advised. However, changes in an advisor's ability to oversee a project as well as a student's redefinition of their area of interest and direction in the graduate program may lead to switching advisors. In such cases, the following departmental procedures apply. If an advisor is no longer able to work with a student, the DGS will act as a temporary advisor until the student is able to identify a new faculty member who consents to act as their major advisor. Likewise, students, **in consultation with the DGS**, may seek a new advisor during their time in the program. Students are advised that doing so can seriously disrupt/delay their progress towards their degree and may result in no degree earned before departmental funding is used up. Students without an advisor are responsible for identifying a faculty member who consents to act as their advisor. If no faculty member is found, the permanent advising role defaults to the DGS or Chair. In such cases, the DGS or Chair may advise changes in a student's research project so that it better corresponds to their expertise in terms of theory, topic and/or method. At all times, switching advisors are also subject to the rules of Graduate School.

#### D. Academic Load

A student enrolled in 9 credit hours or more in a semester is considered to be full time (see the Graduate School Bulletin for more information). Typically, a student who is a Teaching Assistant (TA) will take 9-10 credit hours per semester. Post-qual Ph.D. students (ABDs) should not plan on taking any courses besides the residency credits (767 or 749). It is absolutely essential that any graduate student who wishes to take more than 10 credit hours in a single semester first obtain approval from their adviser and the DGS. **Failure to abide by these rules will result in extra tuition charges that the student will need to pay from their**

**own resources.**

All courses, from any Department or program, numbered 400G through 799 may be counted for credit toward a graduate degree provided they are approved as an appropriate part of the student's graduate program by the student's advisor. Courses offered by any other Department or program that are numbered 400G to 499G may be counted for graduate credit. In choosing additional, non-geography courses and seminars to deepen your course of study, you should follow these three rules:

1. Do not enroll in more than 10 credit hours per semester without written DGS approval
2. Do not enroll in courses with a number below 400G
3. Do not take courses unrelated to your course of study, such as art, physical education or music classes.

Exceptions are possible under conditions as noted below, but only with prior, written DGS approval.

PhD students in Geography generally are discouraged from courses below the 600 level. Graduate students are not allowed to take courses lower than the 400G level (without special waivers and asking for a waiver requires you to prove the relevance of a course to your degree). Generally, any graduate seminar is fine but problematic courses might include art, film, physical education, yoga, or other studies that do not contribute to your degree objectives. When in doubt talk to the DGS.

Examples of scenarios when an overload of more than ten credits or other exceptions may occur include:

- Ph.D. students enrolled in two of the Department's one credit courses (741 / 742 / 743) in addition to three seminars (for a total of 11 credits).
- Students enrolling in the Department's New Maps Plus courses which are four rather than three credits.
- Post-qual Ph.D. students (ABDs) considering courses promoted and organized by the Graduate School such as 'Preparing Future Faculty and Professionals' classes.
- Students needing specific language (particularly those lower than the 400 level) or methodology courses.

In all these examples, a student must talk with the DGS to arrange approval of an overload. **When in doubt, talk with your advisor and DGS.**

Students on Fellowships or other similar types of funding may enroll for 12 credit hours but they **MUST TALK WITH THE DGS** to arrange approval. Failure to do so may result in extra tuition charges that the student will need to pay from their own resources.

**DO NOT AUDIT ANY COURSES.** If you do so, you will be charged tuition and you will be responsible for paying it. Generally, it is possible to 'sit in' (rather than do an official audit) on a course with the permission of the instructor, so ask the instructor. If you have questions on this, consult with the DGS.

### E. Independent Studies

While it is sometimes appropriate to take independent studies, we ask students to first look for graduate seminars for two reasons. First, seminars with low enrollment may be cancelled. Second, graduate education is about learning beyond the very narrow confines of a thesis or dissertation. And your ability to teach across broad topics and situate your work in the discipline can be crucial in job hunting and career success.

The rules for independent studies can be tricky. Please follow the rules and flowchart below and when in doubt consult with the DGS. Not following these rules may result in (1) not being allowed to take qualifying exams because you have insufficient credits; (2) risking visa issues for international students for not being enrolled full time; and (3) not being able to graduate because of insufficient credit hours.

#### *All Students*

- You should only ever take 3 credits of GEO 560. It doesn't matter if it is with a different faculty member. Once, no more.
- You should only ever take 6 credits of GEO 655. It doesn't matter if it is with a different faculty member or if it is the publication seminar. Twice, no more.

#### *MA. Students and Thesis Credits*

- PLAN A (most students): If you need credits/time to work on your thesis you should sign up for GEO 768\*. Plan A MA students should take six credits of GEO 768. DO NOT USE 560 or 655 for this! (\* Note: GEO 768 is run under the DGS's name, not the advisors' name)
- Plan B: see the DGS to discuss.

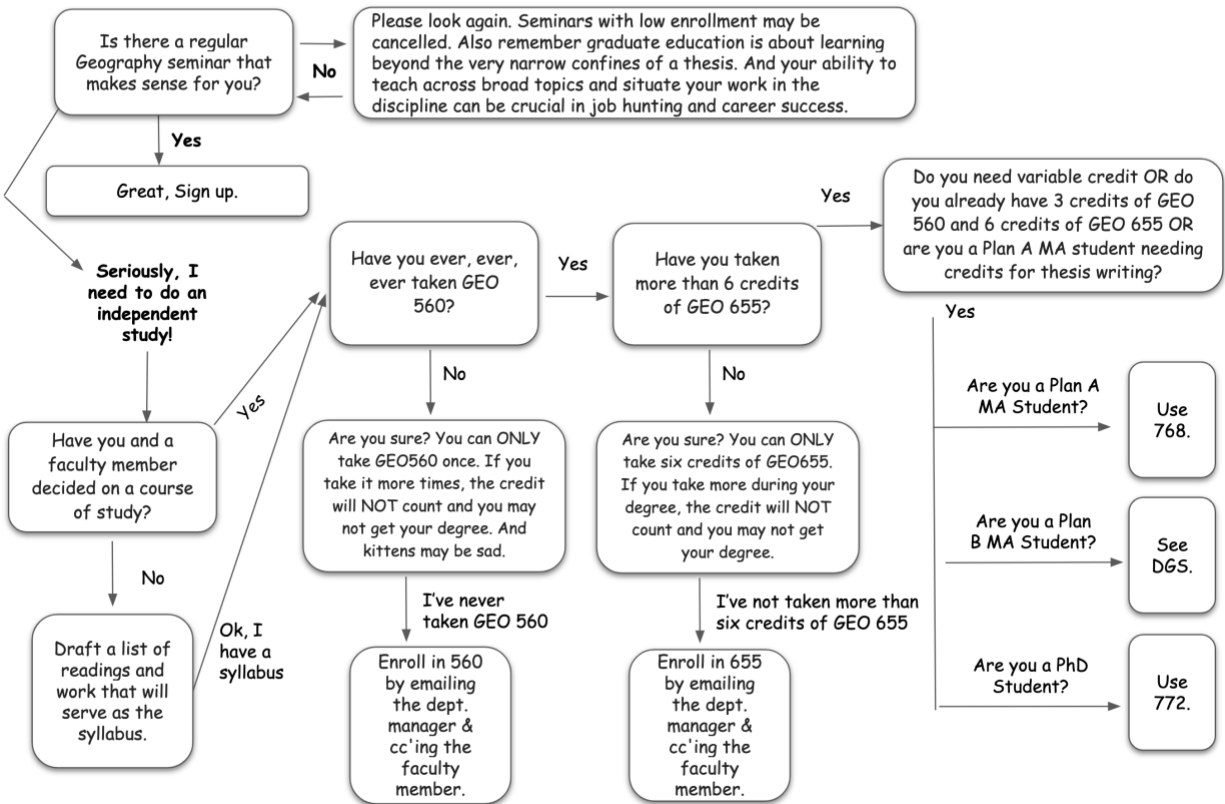
#### *Ph.D. Students*

- After GEO 560 (3 credits) and GEO 655 (6 credits) you should take GEO 772. You should only ever take 12 credits of GEO 772.
- Note: GEO 772 is run under the DGS's name (not the advisors' name)

### **Flowchart for Taking Independent Studies**



## Rules for taking an independent study (Detailed instructions on next page)



## F. Financial Aid and Funding

Each student's specific funding package from the Department is detailed in their offer letter received during the application and acceptance process before entering the degree program. Continued funding is predicated on academic good progress, satisfactory performance of assistantship duties, and funding availability. Questions about your funding should be directed to the DGS who will refer to the funding package in your offer letter. In general, once awarded departmental funding, the Department makes every attempt to support MA students for two years, Ph.D. students holding MA/MS degrees are typically funded for four years. Ongoing departmental funding support is contingent upon the availability of funds and the individual student's good academic progress. Note: funding is also subject to University of Kentucky administrative regulations (A.R.s). For example, current A.R. policy limits graduate funding from all university sources to 5 years with any additional funding requiring approval from the College of Arts and Sciences and/or the University of Kentucky.

Funding from the Department is bound by rules, administrative regulations and procedures set down by the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School and the University of Kentucky. Students facing circumstances affecting their ability to perform their duties as a teaching assistant (sickness, becoming a parent, travel and visa complications, etc.) should

inform the Chair as soon as possible to ensure that they are operating with correct and up-to-date information. In such cases, the Chair will work with the student according to College (<https://www.as.uky.edu/graduate-students>) and Graduate School rules (see <https://gradschool.uky.edu/assistantships>) and the specifics of the student's individual situation.

All students must inform the DGS in writing if they wish to use their funding (TAship, Fellowships or RAships) in the following academic year by February 1. Note: specific TA assignments (recitation leader for a certain class, sole instructor, etc.) are made by the chair and are based on a number of criteria. No one is guaranteed a specific TA assignment.

Nominations for Department, College or University fellowship funding (when available) are determined by the graduate committee (in concert with the chair). Decisions are based on differing evaluative factors based on changing funding situations and students' circumstances. Note: when selecting students to nominate, the graduate committee uses students' CVs on file with the departmental office. For this reason, students are encouraged to update their CV on file as new items appear.

In order to encourage students to apply for support external to the Department, funding from sources external to the Department and which the student has garnered through their own effort does **not** count against the funding package offered by the Department. This is referred to as stopping the funding "clock". Determination of the definition of "external support" vs. "departmental support" must be approved by the DGS (in consultation with the Graduate Committee), and the decision must be recorded in the student's permanent record. In general "departmental support" includes Geography Department Teaching Assistantship Appointments, Geography Department Dedicated Fellowships, A&S Dean's Fellowships and UK Fellowships for which the Geography Department nominates a student (whether through internal competition or not), and any other assistantship or fellowship where the initial offer of support is generated by, through, and on behalf of the Geography Department. Past examples of "external support" include teaching and research assistantships with other units on Campus (e.g. Women's Studies, Committee on Social Theory, Central Advising, Appalachian Center, etc.), and external awards such as Fulbright fellowships, Fulbright-Hays DDRAs or NSF DDRIs in which the applicant undertakes field research. In every case approval to stop the funding clock also is dependent upon the timing of the request; i.e. last-minute decisions which inconvenience the department and are not the result of planning and consultation with the DGS may not be approved.

All Ph.D. students are expected to prepare and submit proposals for external research funding at least once in the course of their program (usually during the third year). This is considered by the Department to be an important element of professional training and development. Faculty members are committed to supporting and assisting students in the development of such proposals. In addition, the Graduate School's Graduate Student Incentive Program offers supplemental funding to students who succeed in gaining nationally competitive research awards. See <http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-student-incentive-program> for details.

Students are also able to stop their funding 'clock' by choosing not to use departmental support for a semester. However, stopping the funding 'clock' can be disruptive to a student's

academic progress and therefore should only be done in concert with the student's advisor and DGS. The decision to do so must be done well in advance of the start of a new semester to minimize disruption to the student's progress and the Department. The most common reason for stopping the clock is for Ph.D. students who are conducting off-site fieldwork (see also the section on Residency requirements). However, it is also possible for M.A. and Ph.D. students to stop the clock in order to attend to major life events or other reasons. Students wishing to stop their funding clock by taking a leave of absence must confer with their advisor and consult with the DGS on proper procedures. The DGS will petition the Graduate School for a leave of absence but the Graduate School is the final arbitrator of these petitions. Failure to follow this procedure may result in financial costs to the student and could require them to re-apply for admission into the program.

Students who choose to pause their funding clock during a semester in which they are offered a departmental fellowship will forfeit the fellowship. They would receive teaching assistantship funding instead when they resume their funding clock. Students are also advised that forgoing departmental support might result in a lapse in their health insurance coverage and require them to pay fees normally covered by departmental support. This is particularly relevant for post-quals Ph.D. students required to take residency credits (see Section III.J on "Residency Requirements"). **When in doubt talk to the DGS.**

**In every case approval to stop the funding clock also is dependent upon the timing of the request; i.e. last-minute decisions which inconvenience the Department and are not the result of planning and consultation with the DGS may not be approved.**

#### G. Possibilities for Research and Conference Funding

This section outlines the funding available via the Department for research and conference funding. Given the yearly variation in both the amount of available funding and student requests for the funds, funding is competitive and not guaranteed. Moreover, the review and awarding process are subject to change.

##### *G.1. Barnhardt-Withington-Block (BWB) Funding – Summer Funding*

The Department has limited block grant and endowment funds (the Barnhart fund and the Withington fund) to assist graduate students in fieldwork, language training and related professional development. The Department also receives block funding from the College of Arts and Sciences. Combined these are commonly referred to as Barnhardt-Withington-Block or BWB funds. The DGS can address questions about acceptable uses for BWB funds. These funds are limited and the amount available year to year varies. They are awarded on a competitive basis and not guaranteed.

The rules and expectations for BWB funds are as follows:

- BWB funds are an important backup for people who have tried and not been able to support their field needs or are in preliminary stages of research (including MA students) for which there are no other sources of funding.
- BWB funds are awarded with the goal of assisting the greatest number of students to advance towards their degree objectives. The allocation of funding is guided in any given year by the limited resources available, student requests and the ability for

some students to gain external funding.

- BWB funding is not merit-based. We seek to use our limited resources in concert with contingent yearly external funding opportunities to serve the most graduate students the best.
- Given the limited nature of BWB there is a ‘lifetime cap’ on research support of \$1,750 for MA students and \$3,000 for PhD students. Ph.D. students who were formerly MA students in the Department will have their BWB ‘lifetime funding’ reset to zero, and therefore can request up to \$3,000 as a Ph.D. student.

Generally, there are two calls for funding proposals each year, one in the Fall and one in Spring. If you are seeking funds for the Summer you should wait until the second call when most students submit proposals. Students can submit to more than one call as long as the total amount received is not more than the cap. The application form is straightforward but requires students discuss and receive approval from their advisor.

All graduate students are eligible to apply for this funding. Applications are reviewed by the faculty on the Graduate Committee. Funds can be spent on travel, fieldwork (including archival work), language training and other research related to the successful completion of theses or dissertations. Given the limited nature of funds we expect eligible students to also apply to other external sources of funds for which they are eligible (e.g., NSF DDRI or GRFP, Fulbright) is looked upon favorably. If sufficient external funding is received, any BWB funding awarded a student may be redirected to other students. If you have questions about BWB funding, consult with the DGS.

### *G.2. Conference Supplemental Funding*

The Department works to provide graduate students with a supplement to attend conferences outside of Lexington. This supplement is designed to help (but not fully) cover costs related to travel, lodging and registration. Given the yearly variation in both the funds amounts and student requests for the funds, funding to all students is not guaranteed. This funding works under the following rules:

- To be eligible for funding a student must be presenting at the conference (paper session, panel session, poster);
- Each student is eligible to receive one supplement per academic year;
- While most students have used this supplement to attend the AAG, it is possible to use it for other conferences;
- Funding received for conferences does NOT count towards the BWB cap; and
- Conference supplement funding is not guaranteed to any individual student.

### H. Graduation

The University of Kentucky awards degrees in May, August, and December of each calendar year. Commencement ceremonies are held in May and December. Candidates graduating in August may choose to participate in either the May or December ceremonies. To be eligible for a degree, a student must file an Application for Degree Card with the Graduate School (online through MyUK) within 30 days after the beginning of the semester (15 days in the summer session) in which they expect to graduate.

## I. Defense Modalities and Expectations

The expectation is that departmental defenses will take place in-person, usually in Miller Hall 6 or 843 POT. The reason for this is that in-person defenses allow for better support for graduate students by their advisor and committee members. It also has allowed for better interactions and flow of conversation between committee members and candidates.

Students can request an exception/accommodation to an in-person defense. Requests should be made (via email to the advisor and DGS) as early as possible but at least four weeks before the planned defense to meet graduate school deadlines. Once a request is made the student, advisor, and DGS will meet to discuss. In alignment with the department's mission to "promote a research and learning environment that is welcoming to all" (see the inclusivity statement in Section I.B), the DGS will take into consideration factors around health as well as capacity and ability, including but not limited to: financial hardship, care-taking responsibilities, and travel, visa and mobility restrictions. As appropriate, the DGS will request the input from the student's full advisory committee on a student's academic progress and preparation for the defense. In accordance with graduate school policy, decisions about requests for exceptions/accommodations are made by the DGS. As always, committee members who are on leave can join a defense remotely.

Ordinarily, MA and PhD defenses, as well as oral qualifying exams, will be scheduled during the academic year while faculty members are on their contracts (August 16 through May 15) in order to ensure that committee members are available.

Time slots for defenses should be reserved as follows in order to accommodate pre-and post-defense deliberations of the committee:

- MA final examination: 1.5 hours (recommended actual time for defense at least one hour)
- Oral qualifying exam: 2.5 hours (recommended actual time for defense two hours)
- PhD final defense: 2.5 hours (recommended actual time for defense two hours)

There is no departmental expectation for oral presentations during defenses or examinations. If a student and/or advisor would like to include a presentation the timeslot for any oral examination needs to be extended accordingly in order to facilitate sufficient time for questions by committee members.

The same expectations apply to MA and PhD proposal meetings, which are not mandated by the Graduate School, but departmental requirements. Proposal defenses should be scheduled for at least one hour, with two hours for a PhD proposal meeting.

## **II. MA PROGRAM**

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### **A. Introduction**

The purpose of the M.A. degree is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to conduct independent research. In addition, the M.A. program is designed to enable students to pursue a substantive area of scholarship at a depth not possible at the undergraduate level. The M.A. degree will usually be completed in two academic years by full time students.

The Department of Geography has two options within the M.A. program. Plan A requires coursework, a thesis, and an oral exam, while Plan B requires coursework, a publishable paper, and a written and oral exam. Note: most M.A. students in the Geography Department pursue Plan A. Either Plan A or Plan B is regarded as acceptable routes for either a terminal MA degree or subsequently undertaking a PhD. The choice of Plan should be made in consultation with the Advisor, committee members and DGS.

### **B. Advisor and Advisory Committee**

M.A. students are strongly encouraged to select an advisor during their first semester. Once a student and advisor have agreed to work with each other, this information should be communicated to the DGS in written or email form. A three-member Advisory Committee will generally be convened no later than the beginning of the third semester for the purpose of guiding the student by reviewing the program of study, and for the student following Plan A (see below) by advising on the development of a thesis research topic, and for the student selecting Plan B (see below) guiding the student in the development of a research paper topic, and assisting the student's preparation for the written examination. In every case, at least two members of the Committee should be Geography faculty members. At least one member of the Advisory Committee must hold Full Graduate Faculty status (generally limited to associate and full professors).

### **C. Plan A Option for MA**

The Plan A Master's Degree requires 30 credit hours. This includes at least 24 credits of coursework, a Thesis, and an oral examination. It is expected that the student will take 6 credit hours of GEO 768 (Residence Credit for Master's Degree) to meet the 30 credit hour requirement. Students should not take more than 6 credit hours of GEO 768. Most students complete more than 30 total hours, but the coursework minimum of 30 hours must be met in accordance with requirements noted below.

#### *C.1. Coursework for Plan A*

The Plan A option for the M.A. Degree requires twenty-four credit hours of coursework. Students are required to complete:

- GEO 600: Introduction to Methods in Geography
- GEO 702: Concepts in Geography

In addition, students are encouraged to seek advanced methods courses (such as GEO 705) relevant to their scholarly interests. Other courses may be selected in light of the candidate's interests and objectives. Courses with the GEO and MAP prefixes are considered to be part of

the Geography Department. The 24 credit hours of coursework used to fulfill degree requirements should meet the following criteria:

- no more than 6 credit hours below the 600 level in the Department of Geography;
- no more than 6 credit hours of independent study;
- at least 16 credit hours taken within the major in the Department of Geography;
- at least 16 credit hours must be regular courses; and
- at least 12 credit hours must be in regular courses numbered at the 600 or 700 level (not independent study courses).

Students should never audit courses without receiving permission from the DGS. Those interested in transferring credits should consult the appropriate section of the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>).

### *C.2. Thesis for Plan A*

Students electing Plan A will complete a thesis. It is recommended that students pursuing this option develop a thesis topic in conjunction with their advisor during their second semester in residence. In the third semester the student should set up and meet with the Advisory Committee to review the thesis proposal. Members of the Advisory Committee should be given a copy of the proposal at least two weeks prior to this meeting.

Procedures for completing the thesis are contained in the Graduate School's Instructions for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/thesis-dissertation-preparation>). Students should be aware that they are required to submit the thesis in an electronic format. See (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/electronic-thesis-preparation>) for details.

### *C.3. Final Oral Examination for Plan A*

The Plan A final oral examination will cover the materials of the core curriculum, the area of topical specialization, and the thesis. Preliminary approval of the final draft of the thesis, including all illustrations, tables, and bibliographic materials, must be obtained from all members of the thesis committee prior to scheduling the date of the examination with the Graduate School. The Graduate School requires 14 days notice prior to all final examinations. The final examination must take place no later than eight days prior to the last day of classes of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. The examination is scheduled by the Graduate Dean upon request by the DGS through the Final Examination Recommendation form ([https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/Selection_Screen.cfm)). The result of the examination is returned to the Graduate School as pass or fail. In the case of failure, the examining committee may recommend to the Graduate School the conditions under which a second examination may be taken. A third examination is not allowed.

### D. Plan B Option for MA

The requirements for Plan B are (1) 30 hours of coursework, (2) a research paper, (3) a written exam and (4) a final oral examination. This option is limited to students with a research paper deemed by the student's committee to be of very high quality (likely to be accepted by a peer review journal) by the beginning of their last semester. Students and advisors considering a Plan B thesis should first consult with the DGS before assuming this is

the best way forward. Again most M.A. students in the Geography Department pursue a Plan A (thesis) for the degree.

#### *D.1. Coursework for Plan B*

The Plan B Option requires thirty credit hours of coursework. Students are required to complete:

- GEO 600: Introduction to Methods in Geography
- GEO 702: Concepts in Geography
- An advanced methods course (such as GEO 705) appropriate to the student's interest and approved by the student's thesis advisor and the DGS

Other courses may be selected in light of the candidate's interests and objectives. Courses with the GEO and MAP prefixes are considered to be part of the Geography Department. The 30 credit hours of coursework that will count toward the degree should meet the following criteria:

- no more than 6 credit hours below the 600 level in the Department of Geography;
- no more than 6 credit hours of independent study;
- at least 20 credit hours taken within the major in the Department of Geography;
- at least 20 credit hours must be regular courses; and
- at least 15 credit hours must be in regular courses numbered at the 600 or 700 level (not independent study courses).

In practice most students complete more than 30 credit hours of coursework, please be sure that you meet the degree requirements above before considering additional coursework. Students should never audit courses without receiving permission from the DGS.

Those interested in transferring credits should consult the appropriate section of the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>).

#### *D.2. Research Paper for Plan B*

Students electing Plan B are also required to complete a research paper **deemed by the student's committee to be of publishable quality**. It is expected that students pursuing this option will develop a coherent program of study in conjunction with their advisor during their second semester in residence. In the third semester the student should set up and meet with the Advisory Committee (see C. Advisory Committee, above) to discuss the research paper. The research paper must be given to all committee members at least one week prior to sitting the written examination.

#### *D.3. Written Examination for Plan B*

Students electing Plan B are required to pass a one day (e.g. 9:00AM – 6:00PM) written examination. The examination will be closed book, though the student may use one page of notes. The one day written examination covers materials from the required coursework and the student's area of specialization. Questions for the written examination will be gathered from the Advisory Committee and compiled by the student's advisor. The written examination must be distributed to the committee members no later than one week prior to the final oral



examination.

#### *D.4. Final Oral Examination for Plan B*

To complete Plan B, students will take a final oral examination based on a student's program of study, written examination, and research paper. The Graduate School requires 14 days' notice prior to all final examinations. The final examination must take place no later than eight days prior to the last day of classes of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. The examination is scheduled by the Graduate Dean upon request by the DGS through the Final Examination Recommendation form ([https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/Selection_Screen.cfm)). The result of the examination is returned to the Graduate School as pass or fail. In the case of failure, the examining committee may recommend to the Graduate School the conditions under which a second examination may be taken. A third examination is not allowed.

#### E. Residency Requirement

A student seeking an M.A. degree is encouraged to spend at least one academic year as a full-time student. Students satisfactorily completing 9 (or more) credit hours of graduate-level work in residence during a semester are classified as full-time.

#### F. GEO 741 Requirement

GEO 741 is required for all Geography M.A. students working as teaching assistants. In order to build teaching skills for their time at U.K., students should take GEO 741 their first semester. GEO 741 will fulfill grad school / SACS requirements for TA training. With advisor/DGS approval students can substitute another course to meet this requirement, e.g., EPE 672 College Teaching and Learning (3 credit hours) or GS 699 Practicum in College Teaching (3 credit hours) or adjust the timing for taking GEO 741.

#### G. Applying to Ph.D. Programs

Students in the MA program considering applying to Ph.D. programs in order to continue their graduate education are strongly encouraged to seek their advisors' advice early in the fall semester of the second year. Faculty advisors can help to identify appropriate Ph.D. programs, whether at the University of Kentucky or elsewhere, and they generally provide the primary reference letter for student applications. To that end, timely work on a thesis proposal, the thesis itself, or the paper being used for Plan B is critical in order to adequately and accurately evaluate the student's potential for academic success at the doctoral level. Successful MA work at the University of Kentucky is not a guarantee of admission to and/or funding in the Ph.D. program as the evaluation processes for MA and Ph.D. applicants carry different evaluative criteria. University of Kentucky MA students applying to the University of Kentucky Ph.D. program are considered for admission and funding as part of the general pool of applicants in any given year.

### **III. PH.D. PROGRAM**

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#### **A. Introduction**

The purpose of the Ph.D. degree is to provide students with advanced knowledge in the philosophy, methodology, and practice of geography. Emphasis is placed on providing the theoretical capacity and the methodological skills enabling the student to make significant and original research contributions.

The Ph.D. program assumes that students have had training equivalent to that required by the M.A. program in geography at the University of Kentucky. Additional graduate coursework may be required for students lacking an adequate background in geography. The Ph.D. program consists of the following:

- selecting an advisor and advisory committee;
- completing course requirements;
- compiling a reading list;
- preparing a dissertation proposal (a written document that is defended orally);
- sitting for a qualifying exam consisting of written responses to a series of questions and an oral examination on those responses);
- completing a dissertation; and
- sitting for a final oral exam (commonly referred to as the “dissertation defense” but technically open to all aspects of the candidate’s program).

These steps are detailed below. Please also see the Graduate School Bulletin (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>). Students are responsible for knowing the principles and rules governing the Advisory Committee, Residency Requirements, and language competence.

#### **B. Advisor and Advisory Committee**

Students should work closely with their advisor to design a suitable and comprehensive scholarly program focused on one of the Department’s research clusters (see <https://geography.as.uky.edu/geography-research-clusters>). Ph.D. students generally select an advisor by their second semester in residence. Under Graduate School rules, Ph.D. advising is a privilege of full graduate faculty membership, and is generally limited to associate and full professors.

Once a student and advisor have agreed to work with each other, this information should be communicated to the DGS in written or email form. There is NO graduate school form for selecting an advisor. A student seeking to change advisors must consult with the DGS (see section on student advising).

The Advisory Committee has a core of four members and consists of the student’s advisor as Chair, and at least three additional members chosen in conjunction with the advisor. Ph.D. committees must have at least four members that include at least two geography faculty and at least one 'external' non-geography faculty members. Additional members of the committee are permitted. The Doctoral Advisory Committee Request Form is submitted to the Graduate School for approval as soon as the Committee has been determined, first in consultation with

the student's advisor and, second with the approval of all committee members.  
([http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm))

Possible advisory committee configurations include:

- Three geography professors and one non-geography professor; and
- Two geography professors and two non-geography professors.

Three members of the advisory committee must be full members of the Graduate School, so generally only one assistant professor may sit on a Ph.D. committee.

The core of the Committee must be kept at its full complement throughout the student's program. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee (occasioned by faculty departure, for example) an appropriate replacement must be arranged prior to any committee decision. All decisions of the Advisory Committee are by a majority vote of its Graduate Faculty members. Advisory Committee decisions are reported to the DGS who transmits them to the Graduate School. In addition to advising and program planning, the Advisory Committee undertakes administration of the qualifying examination, supervision of the dissertation, and administration of the final examination.

Non-UK associate or full professors may, with the approval of the DGS and Graduate School, serve as an additional voting member of an existing four-member committee. This means that the student will still need four other UK grad faculty committee members, one of which is outside of Geography. In order to have a non-UK faculty member added to a student's committee please consult with the DGS. More information is available at <https://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-faculty>.

Common parlance designates the student seeking a Ph.D. as a doctoral *student* prior to sitting the qualifying exam, and as a doctoral *candidate* after successfully passing the qualifying exam. It is during the candidacy stage that one might be referred to as "ABD" or All But Dissertation.

### C. Course Requirements

Required courses include offerings in geographic philosophy, methodology and professional development. Every Ph.D. student must take the following group of core courses:

- GEO 600: Introduction to Methods in Geography.
  - Students completing a similar course as part of their MA/MS program may be granted an exemption. Students interested in this should consult with the DGS and the professor of record for 600 who will review course materials (e.g., syllabus and student papers) to determine eligibility.
- GEO 702: Concepts in Geography
- GEO 705: Advanced Methods
  - Depending on the student's interests and course availability, alternative courses can be approved by the student's advisor in concert with the DGS.
- Three one-credit hour Professional Development Courses
  - GEO 741: Teaching Practicum
  - GEO 742: Professional Development
  - GEO 743: Research Proposal Development and Grant Writing

These courses are generally taught on the following rotation although this can vary.

- Fall: 702, 600, 741
- Spring: 705, 742, 743

A major emphasis of the Ph.D. program is research training obtained in seminars. Most of these seminars are focused on the Department's research clusters. The seminar environment offers opportunities to explore in depth not only topical themes but also theoretical and methodological aspects of particular research domains. In many cases published research papers and dissertation topics are developed as a result of these seminars. Courses with the GEO and MAP prefixes are considered to be part of the Geography Department. Generally, any graduate seminar in other UK Departments (600 level and above) is acceptable but check with the DGS about other kinds of courses so that proper permissions may be received from the Graduate School. Students should never audit courses without receiving permission from the DGS.

Students lacking adequate foundation in substantive areas pertinent to their program of study may be required to take additional courses. In most cases, full time students can expect to spend at least three years beyond the Masters degree to complete a Ph.D.

#### D. Compiling a Reading List

When preparing their dissertation proposal and for qualifying exams, students are expected to closely engage with relevant literatures to their research (both topically and methodology) as well as articulate a connection to the larger discipline of Geography. This represents an important opportunity for students to define and develop their own intellectual project. To facilitate this, students should prepare a reading list that forms the bibliography for their dissertation proposal, and update this reading list for their qualifying exam. Students should consult with their advisor and advisory committee about the specific approach, expectations with respect to how the reading list is used in the qualifying exams, and the timing of reading list development in each student's case.

The exact length of a reading list varies according to the project, student and advisor. Students should consult with their advisor about the best format for their project.

#### E. Dissertation Proposal and Defense

Building from the reading list the student shall present a formal dissertation proposal to the Advisory Committee for review before taking the Qualifying Examination. The goal of the dissertation proposal defense is to provide students with input on research design and methodology, identify gaps with a student's knowledge of substantive and theoretical areas and otherwise strengthen the proposed dissertation project.

The advisor works with the student on the proposal (although the student can consult with Advisory Committee members) and approves the scheduling of the proposal defense. The proposal should include a problem statement, a framing that connects their research to the discipline of Geography, a review of appropriate literatures, a research design (including data collection procedures and proposed methods of analysis), chapter outline, and bibliography (which should largely be based on their reading list). The proposal must be given to the Committee at least two weeks prior to the dissertation proposal defense. The Advisory

Committee will meet with the student to review the proposal at a departmental proposal defense.

Revisions to the proposal may be required before the student is permitted to proceed to the qualifying examination. The Advisory Committee may also recommend additions to a student's reading list (and other activities) before permitting the qualifying exam.

#### F. Qualifying Exam

A qualifying examination is required of all students for the Ph.D. in order to determine whether the student should be admitted to candidacy. More importantly, the qualifying exam (along with the dissertation proposal) provides students with the opportunity to define and develop their own, unique, intellectual project. This will not only guide them during their dissertation but lays the foundations for their future careers as scholars.

Students should work with their advisors on the input received from the proposal defense to prepare for the qualifying exam. The student's reading list serves as the foundation for their qualifying exam evaluation, and for this reason students should consult with their Advisory Committee after their proposal defense to ask members for recommendations for additional readings. It is the department's expectation that students and faculty will act in a timely fashion to request and provide this kind of input (generally within two weeks). **When in doubt consult with the DGS.**

##### *F.1. Requirements to Sit the Qualifying Exam*

The qualifying examination is given only after the student has satisfactorily completed core courses (with no incomplete, or "I", grades), successfully defended their proposal, met pre-candidacy residency requirements (see section H: Residency below), and satisfied any language requirements determined in consultation with their advisor.

The qualifying examination is administered in accordance with Graduate School policy (<https://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin>) which includes filing a Recommendation for Qualifying Examination form with the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the oral portion of the qualifying exam.

##### *F.2. Overview of the Qualifying Exam*

The qualifying examination comprises a written and an oral component. The oral defense of the written component is the part considered to be "The Qualifying Exam" in Graduate School terminology. Note that the format of the written component is a departmental prerogative and is considered to be "open book." The qualifying examination is administered by the student's Advisory Committee. The advisor shall assume primary responsibility for developing the format, soliciting input, and formulating questions for each section of the written examination. The specifics of the questions may NOT be communicated to the student in advance. Students are expected to consult with Advisory Committee members to ensure that preparation for each subject area is comprehensive.

##### *F.3. Written Component of the Qualifying Exam*

The written component of the qualifying exam is specific to the Geography Department and entails three separate sections detailed below. Each section typically contains several questions

and is allotted one working day (10 hours) for the student to respond. The sections are divided by at least a one-day break. Each exam is not to exceed a 12-page limit (double spaced, with 12-point font). The total qualifying exam written period may not exceed 14 days. The specifics of the questions may NOT be communicated to the student in advance. The student may contact their advisor for clarification concerning the questions via email after receiving the questions of the exam.

The three sections of the written component of the Qualifying Exam will exam the student on the following:

1. History and Philosophy of Geography. This examination is designed to test the student's knowledge and understanding of the history of the major schools of thought and key concepts within the discipline. A clear understanding of contemporary directions in geography and an ability to situate research relative to important theories and schools of thought within geography will be expected. In addition to this broad grounding, students are required to develop a specific concentration in at least one domain of the history and philosophy of the discipline.

2. Research Design and Methodology. This examination is designed to test the student's knowledge and understanding of alternative approaches to research design and familiarity with research techniques employed in geography and allied fields. The examination will involve two components. First, it will evaluate the degree to which the student possesses a broad understanding of the full range of research methods and approaches employed in the discipline, the way in which they relate to one another, and their practical and ethical implications. Second, each student is required to select a major methodological or techniques focus, such as quantitative methods, qualitative methods, or field methods, for further examination. It is assumed that the student will possess detailed knowledge of the chosen methodological specialty and that he or she will be able to place its use within the context of alternative methodologies.

3. Primary Area of Topical Specialization. This examination will test the degree to which the student has developed an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their chosen field. In addition to thorough knowledge of the literature in the area of topical specialization, students will be expected to have developed a clear perspective on current issues facing the chosen subfield. The area of topical specialization will be defined through consultation with the student's Advisory Committee such that the chosen specialization is neither overly narrow nor overly general in scope. Topics examined in the first or second examination are not eligible for consideration as the subject matter of the student's topical specialization.

The student is responsible for distributing copies of the written responses to all Advisory Committee members at the end of the written component time period (which can be no more than 14 days in total). The written responses shall become a part of the student's permanent record.

#### *F.4. Oral Defense of the Qualifying Exam*

The oral defense of the written component is the part considered to be “The Qualifying Exam” in Graduate School terminology and needs to be scheduled with the Graduate School at least two weeks in advance of the oral examination date.

The oral defense of the qualifying examination will focus on the written responses of the student that cover (as above) the history and philosophy of the discipline, research design and methodology, and the student's area of topical specialization in geography, including those particular areas of strength and weakness as identified in the written section. The examination also may cover other areas deemed important by members of the Committee. Once the oral defense of the qualifying exam has been scheduled it must proceed, regardless of the quality of the written responses.

#### *F.5. Qualifying Exam Outcomes*

The student will learn whether they have passed at the conclusion of the oral examination after committee members have had a chance to deliberate.

The Advisory Committee reports the outcome of the qualifying examination to the DGS, who relays the result to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the student has passed the qualifying exam, the Graduate School will notify the student that he or she has been accepted as a candidate for the Ph.D. degree. If the student has failed the qualifying exam, the advisory committee determines the conditions to be met before another examination may be given. The minimum time between examinations is four months. A second examination must be taken within one year after the first examination. A third examination is not permitted.

#### G. The Dissertation

Each Ph.D. candidate must complete a dissertation which is the result of original research and adds to or significantly modifies what was previously known on the subject. Procedures for undertaking and writing the dissertation are outlined in the Graduate School's Manual for Theses and Dissertations (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/thesis-dissertation-preparation>). The dissertation must be completed in all ways before the Final Examination can be scheduled. Students must submit the dissertation in an electronic format. See <http://gradschool.uky.edu/thesis-dissertation-preparation> for details.

The choice of dissertation option should be discussed (and decided upon) between the student and their PhD committee **at the defense of qualifying examination**, no earlier.

#### *G.1 Three-Article Dissertation Option*

With the consent of the student's PhD Advisory Committee a three-article option may be completed in lieu of the traditional dissertation. The three papers must have a common focus and be of a quality that the student's PhD Committee feels would be publishable in appropriate professional journals. To conform to Graduate School requirements the three papers must be in standard dissertation format and there must be a separate chapter introducing the work and one summarizing the conclusions found in the work.

##### G.1.1 Nature and Quantity of Articles

- The three papers should be thematically linked and reflect a trajectory of work with depth of inquiry in a common area.
- Each paper must contribute significantly to the frontier of knowledge and be deemed publishable in a reputable refereed journal.
- There should not be considerable overlap in the material covered in the papers

### G.1.2. Progress and Co-Authorship

- At least one article should be accepted for publication by the time of the final examination (dissertation defense).
- One other article should be submitted at the time of the dissertation defense
- One third article can be submitted or must be ready for submission to an academic journal at the time of the dissertation defense
- The student will be the sole or lead author on all three articles. For co-authored articles the geography Department requires a brief explanation (appendix) detailing the specific contributions of each author in the paper (as is common for merit and progress reviews.)

### G.1.3. Article Quality and Outlets

- Articles submitted, accepted, or published before the final examination (dissertation defense) are acceptable, as long as the committee is satisfied. If the committee is not satisfied with the quality of the articles (even if articles are accepted or published), the student must continue to make improvements to satisfy the committee. The committee's decision supersedes any journal editor's acceptance and/or decision.
- While the geography Department does not specify acceptable journals as outlets for publication the Department encourages students (and their committees) to aim high. The choice of outlet should be made in close consultation with the student's academic advisor and committee members. (For journal suggestions please see ISI Rankings for physical and human geography: <http://admin-apps.webofknowledge.com/JCR/JCR.>)

### G.1.4 Introduction, Conclusion, Methods Appendix

- The geography Department requires an introduction and a conclusion that introduce the overall purpose and contribution of the set of articles, and which draw out the significance of the overall project. This introduction and conclusion, accordingly, go beyond the introduction and conclusion of each article as they draw out the connections between the individual papers.
- The geography Department requires a methods appendix in which the overall research design and methods of data collection and analysis are detailed.

## *G.2 Flexibility with Three-Article Dissertation Option.*

In consultation with the PhD committee the student can convert to a traditional dissertation option if it becomes clear that the three-article dissertation does not seem advisable (this may be due to issues with fieldwork and data analysis that cannot be parsed out over time, the field of study which would make a dissertation closer to book form more advisable, etc.)

## H. The Final Exam

The Final Exam commonly is referred to as the “dissertation defense” but it may cover all aspects of the doctoral candidate's program. As per Graduate School policies, at least one academic year, but no more than five years, must elapse between the qualifying examination and the final examination.

The Final Exam entails a series of “form filing” requirements (available on the Graduate



School website) as follows:

- The Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination must be filed at least eight weeks before the exam (defense) date. This form prompts the Graduate School Dean to appoint an outside examiner to represent the Graduate School (and ensure proper procedure) at the Final Exam.
- The Application for Degree Form must be filed by the published deadline of the semester in which the student plans to graduate via the MyUK portal.
- The Request for Final Doctoral Examination form must be filed at least two weeks prior to the Final Exam.

Note that the Final Exam must take place no later than eight days prior to the last day of classes of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. Final examinations are public events and must take place while the University is officially in session. If the candidate passes the final examination, he or she will be recommended for conferral of the Ph.D. degree. The examination committee may choose to suggest additions or revisions in the dissertation at the time of final examination. If revisions or additions to the dissertation are required, the Committee Chair or a designate will oversee the work. The final, corrected copy of the dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School within 60 days of the final examination or all graduate work concerning the dissertation must be repeated. If the candidate fails their final examination, the committee may recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School the conditions under which the candidate may have another examination. This examination will be administered by as many of the original committee members as are available, with new members appointed by the Dean to fill any vacancies.

### I. Language Requirement

The Geography Department and the Graduate School have no formal language requirements. However, in light of Geography's claim to relevance in a globalized world, it is strongly recommended that all Ph.D. students have competence in a foreign language. Students whose particular dissertation topics require foreign field work, understanding of subjects speaking other languages, or the need to read in languages other than English may be required by their advisor to demonstrate training and/or competence in a relevant language other than English. Before enrolling in any language classes see the restrictions outlined in the Academic Load section and/or consult with the DGS.

### J. Residency Requirements

"Residency" in the parlance of the Graduate School refers to tuition-paid semesters as a graduate student (and not necessarily to the vernacular understanding of "residence" as residing in a place). There are both pre-qualifying exam and post-qualifying exam residency requirements. See the most recent Graduate School Catalog for a more detailed description of the residency requirements (<http://catalogs.uky.edu/index.php?catoid=13>). Post-qualifying exam requirements for Ph.D. candidates (also referred to as post-quals or ABD students) enroll for two credits of GEO 767 every semester until they complete their degree. Students should not plan on taking any courses besides residency once they have passed quals, although they can petition for permission to do so in exceptional circumstances. Students without departmental funding are responsible for paying the tuition costs for these two credits.

To help facilitate fieldwork the DGS will petition the Graduate School on behalf of ABD students for permission to take up to two semesters of GEO 749 (a zero-credit class designed for students completing fieldwork that fulfills residency requirements). The advantage of GEO 749 during fieldwork is that there are no tuition costs. Note: the Graduate School is the final arbitrator of petitions and students are not guaranteed the ability to enroll in GEO 749. The graduate school's policy is not to approve GEO 749 for local fieldwork.

GEO 749 should be taken during a student's primary engagement in fieldwork or data collection and should be taken consecutively (if taking two semesters). In extraordinary circumstances, the department may support a petition for two semesters of non-consecutive enrollment in GEO 749. Students can request an additional two semesters of GEO 749 (for a total of four semesters), but only if the student is engaged primarily in data collection during the semester in which they are enrolled.

Because GEO 749 is justified to the Graduate School by the fact that students are engaged in intensive fieldwork (and thus not using on-campus facilities and resources), they should not be regularly participating in campus and/or department activities or have an official on-campus role. This means, for example, students taking 749 could not work as an RA or do similar on-campus work, use departmental labs or office space, or serve on departmental or university committees.

GEO 749 is not available for students primarily engaged in dissertation writing, although there is no prohibition on doing a small amount of dissertation writing (such as a background chapter or methods chapters) while engaged primarily in fieldwork. Given this, a student cannot defend their dissertation during a semester in which they are registered for GEO 749.

In all cases, students wishing to be considered for enrollment in GEO 749 must first seek the approval of their advisor. The thesis advisor then submits an email of support (outlining the justification for 749) to the DGS, who then petitions the graduate school. Requests for 749 enrollment beyond two semesters must first be approved by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences. The DGS and Department cannot guarantee that the Graduate School will approve any petitions.

#### **IV. DEPARTMENTAL CITIZENSHIP, REVIEW, AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

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##### **A. Departmental Citizenship**

The Department places great emphasis on a collegial and nurturing academic milieu. While we realize that the nature of academic scholarship, especially in the social sciences and humanities, often favors the autonomous and independent researcher, the Department nevertheless works to foster a sense of departmental citizenship which transcends the individual faculty or staff member and student. The responsibilities of departmental citizenship include a commitment to building a positive working environment and contributing to the success of the community at various scales (Department, College of A&S, UK Graduate School, the University of Kentucky, the discipline of Geography, etc.) Practical examples of this include (but are not limited to) a number of ongoing departmental practices, such as: seminar participation that realizes the benefits of working through literatures as a group with sometimes disparate and varied levels of previous experience and preparation; a funding

approach that seeks the success of the entire graduate cohort to greatest extent possible; the expectation of attendance at departmental colloquia; membership in the Geography Graduate Student Union; student membership on departmental committees; participation at regional and national conferences and papers submitted to refereed journals. Good departmental citizenship extends to all of the identities that every graduate student embodies, whether as individual, scholar, or teacher.

### B. Yearly Reviews

All first-year graduate students entering in the Fall semester will be reviewed after the midpoint of the Spring Semester. First-year students will meet with convened faculty members of the Graduate Committee in order to review each student's progress in the program and, when necessary, discuss problem areas and recommend strategies to remedy them. Subsequent to this meeting, a written evaluation will be sent to the student and to their advisor by the DGS and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent file. In addition, any ongoing graduate student (i.e. not in their first year) may request a review by the graduate committee during this review period. In general, evaluation of good progress toward a degree is monitored by the student in consultation with their advisor, and in general accordance with the timing implied in the MA and Ph.D. checklists appended below.

Beyond the first year the DGS will annually (after the midpoint of the Spring semester) consult with the doctoral student's/candidate's advisor and committee members in order to make a formal evaluation of progress and a written report. That report shall be provided to the student, who shall be allowed to respond in writing should they desire. The report and any response shall become part of the student's/candidate's permanent record.

#### *B.1 Action Plan and Review Following No Progress Toward Ph.D.*

If a PhD student's annual progress review does not show progress toward their dissertation project (as outlined in the Geography Graduate Handbook, Section IV. C), the DGS will ask the student and their advisor to devise an action plan for the following academic year, in which milestones (such as sitting qualifying exams, fieldwork goals, completing dissertation chapters) are clearly defined and attached to mutually agreed upon deadlines.

The following annual review will be conducted by the Graduate Committee. Should this review not show significant progress on the mutually agreed upon items, the student will be asked to leave the PhD program. In cases of serious intervening circumstances (such as health, care-taking responsibilities or factors limiting capacity and ability) the PhD advisor and/or the PhD student can petition the Graduate Committee to extend the deadline by one semester for completing the tasks. Failure to complete the tasks in that semester will result in removal of the student from the program.

### C. Academic Progress

While individual student pathways to successfully completing a graduate degree in Geography vary, there are a number of general guidelines and measures which constitute good academic progress. The most direct measure of progress is adherence to the checklist for the MA and Ph.D. degrees (following) in a timely manner. The Department strongly encourages

students to undertake the core course requirements in sequence and with their entering cohort.

**Individual circumstances and contingencies may alter that timing and will be taken into consideration**, however, specific activities that clearly violate the good progress standard include, but are not limited to: plagiarism (including self-plagiarism; e.g. submitting the same project as part of the seminar requirements for two different professors without prior consultation); a record of poor grades and seminar performance (note that the graduate student grading scale is limited to A, B, E, Incomplete) failure to meet minimum obligations under fellowship or teaching assistantship (including those failures resulting from employment external to the University).

“Good progress” through the graduate program is generally measured by completion of the following tasks:

*C.1. MA Students*

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
Select an advisor	Semester 1 (end)
Select committee	Semester 2 (beginning)*
Draft proposal for research	Semester 2
Meet with committee about proposal	Semester 2
Fieldwork / Lab work / Archival work	Summer after first year
Analysis / Writing / Drafts	Semester 3** and Semester 4
Thesis Defense (Plan A) OR Exam and Paper Defense (Plan B)	Semester 4 (end)

\*\* Students interested in a Ph.D. should (1) discuss their plans with their advisor by the start of the third semester and (2) plan to make significant progress on their thesis in the third semester.

*C.2. Ph.D. Students*

Entering Ph.D. students are expected to have a completed Masters degree in hand prior to beginning their first semester.

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
Select an advisor	During Year 1 (earlier is better)
Select committee	Discuss with advisor during Year 1, finalize by beginning of Year 2
Select outside committee member	Discuss with advisor during Year 1, finalize by beginning of Year 2
Proposal defense	Year 2 to beginning of Year 3
Qualifying Exam	Year 2 to end of 5th semester

Presenting dissertation work at AAG (or other conferences)	Varies, generally after qualifying exams or during/after fieldwork
Apply for external funding for fieldwork (e.g., NSF DDRI, Fulbright, etc.)	After (or around the same time as) qualifying exams
Fieldwork / Lab work / Archival work	Mid-Year 2 and/or Year 3+
Analysis / Writing	Year 3 and/or Year 4+
Defend dissertation	End of Year 4+
Job Search	Fall of Academic Year that dissertation defense is planned

As per graduate school requirements Ph.D. students will be reviewed annually (generally in the Spring) by the graduate committee.

Data on student progress – including the tasks set out above – will be collected annually by the DGS. The deadline for submission of information will be the Monday following Spring Break. The DGS, student advisor and the Graduate Committee will review the forms and students will be informed in writing of the results of the review.

If there are concerns about good academic progress, the DGS in conjunction with the advisor will provide the student with a list of specific tasks and accomplishments to be achieved by set dates. Failure to meet these targets or deadlines can result in a loss of funding.

## V. Checklists

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### A. MA Checklist: Plan A (Thesis Option)

- \_\_\_ GEO 600
- \_\_\_ GEO 702
- \_\_\_ GEO 741 (for those starting Fall22 or later)
- \_\_\_ GEO 705 (optional)
- \_\_\_ 24 hours of required coursework, 30 hours total for degree. (6 hours should be in GEO 768 Masters Thesis Research for MA Plan A students)
- \_\_\_ Second semester review of thesis research proposal by Advisory Committee
- \_\_\_ Third semester review of draft thesis by Advisory Committee
- \_\_\_ The Application for Degree Form must be filed via MyUK by the published deadline of the semester in which the student plans to graduate
- \_\_\_ Thesis submitted to committee two weeks prior to final oral examination.
- \_\_\_ Oral examination scheduled with committee members and room reserved
- \_\_\_ Final Examination form submitted to Graduate School two weeks prior final oral examination. Note: You cannot schedule your oral exam if you have any outstanding Incompletes (“I” grades) on your transcript.
- \_\_\_ Thesis to be submitted electronically to the Graduate School within 60 days of successful examination along with a Thesis (ETD) Approval Form

B. MA Checklist: Plan B (Exam Option)

- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 600
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 702
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 741 (for those starting Fall22 or later)
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 705 (or equivalent advanced methods class approved by advisor and DGS)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30 hours of coursework total
- \_\_\_\_\_ Second semester review of thesis research proposal by Advisory Committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Third semester review of research paper plan with Advisory Committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Application for Degree Form must be filed by the published deadline of the semester in which the student plans to graduate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral examination scheduled with committee members and room reserved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Final Examination Recommendation form submitted to Graduate School two weeks prior final oral examination. Note: You cannot schedule your oral exam if you have any outstanding Incompletes ("I" grades) or missing grades on your transcript.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paper submitted to committee members one week prior to sitting for written examination.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Written examination submitted to committee one week prior to oral examination.

### C. Ph.D. Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 600 (or record of equivalency signed by the professor of record for 600 or DGS)
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 702
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 705 Advanced methods class (or equivalent approved by advisor and DGS).
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 741
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 742
- \_\_\_\_\_ GEO 743
- \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor identified (by end of 2nd semester) and registered with the DGS
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify language competency needs and plan (if any) by 2nd – 3rd semester
- \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Formed (3rd semester) and The Formation of Doctoral Advisory Committee Form is submitted to the Graduate School
- \_\_\_\_\_ Compile a reading list
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dissertation Proposal scheduled with committee and room reserved with at least two weeks prior notice
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dissertation Proposal defended
- \_\_\_\_\_ Written Component of Qualifying Exam. Answers distributed to committee at least two weeks before scheduled oral exam.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Qualifying Examination form filed with the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the oral defense of qualifying exam.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oral defense of qualifying exam. Passing means that the student is now a PhD candidate (called ABD, All But Dissertation)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare and submit proposals for external research funding (generally after the qualifying exam but prior is also possible)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conduct research and write dissertation
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination must be filed at least eight weeks before the exam date
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Application for Degree Form must be filed via MyUK by the published deadline of the semester in which the student plans to graduate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Final Examination must be scheduled with advisor, committee, and identified external Member (Graduate School representative)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Request for Final Doctoral Examination form must be filed at least two weeks prior to the Final Exam
- \_\_\_\_\_ Final copy of the dissertation is filed electronically with the Graduate School along with the ETD Approval Form which needs to be signed by the student, her/his advisor, and the DGS.