

Geography and Urban Studies BA

Overview

The Department of Geography, Environment and Urban Studies offers a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Urban Studies, a major in Environmental Studies, a minor in Geography and Urban Studies, a minor in Environmental Studies, and a certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Many of our students choose to complete a double major, a minor in a complementary discipline, or the GIS certificate.

The **Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Urban Studies** combines the discipline of geography with the field of urban studies to offer a program that emphasizes geographic theory and methods to the study of urban and regional processes and problems in the U.S. and international settings. Our graduates are equipped with the intellectual and methodological tools necessary to understand and address a wide range of environmental, economic, social and political challenges that are central to the well-being of billions of people in an increasingly connected and urbanizing world.

The major focuses on the four themes of globalization, sustainability, social justice and geographic methods that are increasingly central to understanding and addressing global challenges. Geography and Urban Studies majors learn geographic theory and methods that examine the complexity of human-environmental interactions; the increasing interconnectedness of the global economy, environment, culture and politics; and the importance of place and context in people's daily lives.

The Geography and Urban Studies major introduces students to urban processes, spatial relations, geospatial technologies including GIS, and qualitative and quantitative social science research methods. In required courses and electives, students examine urban issues; the role of political institutions; policy-making; and human interactions with the environment. The Geography and Urban Studies gateway courses are designed to develop the theoretical and methodological frameworks and tools necessary to understand the relationships among people, places and the environment as they interact through local and global connections. The electives give students the opportunity to develop an area of emphasis around their particular interests. Students focus on an individualized research project in their Senior Research Seminar. Each student's program is developed with a departmental advisor to suit individual interests and is designed to maximize educational and career opportunities. We encourage our students to incorporate a semester abroad and/or an internship into their plan of study.

The objective of the Bachelor of Arts program in Geography and Urban Studies is to provide students with an understanding of:

- How space, place, and scale shape the interaction between environment and society;
- Critical thinking skills developed through examining a range of analytical approaches to investigate geographic, urban, and environmental processes;
- Contemporary explanatory frameworks in Geography and Urban Studies such as political ecology, feminist and poststructuralist theory, and development theory;
- The application of information technology skills to analyze spatial and temporal information, processes, and patterns through integrative research experiences;
- Practical considerations of community and environmental organizational settings at the local and regional scales.

Campus Location: Main

Program Code: LA-GUS-BA

Distinction in Major

Geography and Urban Studies students can graduate with distinction if they have, at the time of graduation, a 3.5 GPA in the major and a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Career Preparation

Geography and Urban Studies graduates are especially competitive in the job market because of their technical and critical thinking skills, a sense of the complexity of interactions between humans and the environment, and their ability to synthesize information at a variety of scales. Students have the opportunity to gain technical skills in spatial statistics, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), cartographic production and design, and qualitative methods that are highly valued by employers. Our graduates find employment with nonprofits (domestic and international), planning or government agencies, consulting firms and citizens' organizations. Many also go on to graduate programs in geography, planning, environmental studies, law and other fields. The Department of Labor estimates that employment for geographers, planners and other geographic professions is expected to grow at a rate of twenty percent or more for the next decade.

Double-Counting Across Curricula Policy

Many students elect to take a combination of the Geography and Urban Studies major or minor and the Environmental Studies major or minor as they are complementary programs, but there are limits in terms of which courses may count for the two curricula.

The ONLY courses that can double-count between the Geography and Urban Studies and Environmental Studies majors are: GUS 3161 Spatial Statistics/ENST 3161 Spatial Statistics; GUS 2197 Research Design in Geography and Urban Studies/ENST 2097 Research Design in Environmental

Studies; GUS 3062 Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems/ENST 3062 Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems. When used for the major in either program, these courses may not be used to fulfill the minor elective requirements of the other program.

Note that GUS 4198 Senior Seminar in Geography and Urban Studies and ENST 4198 Senior Research Seminar are NOT cross-listed seminars. Anyone pursuing a double major in Geography and Urban Studies and Environmental Studies must take both capstone courses.

Internships

We encourage students to apply their skills and knowledge in a credit-bearing internship that utilizes their academic training. Assignments at planning, social service, environmental and other agencies, as well as at firms that specialize in mapping and geographic data analysis, have helped our graduates in securing employment opportunities. The internship is complemented by a seminar in which students discuss their experiences. Contact guses@temple.edu for more information on this opportunity.

Accelerated Programs

Undergraduate Geography and Urban Studies students have an opportunity to graduate with both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree within five years in one of the following accelerated programs.

- BA in Geography and Urban Studies + Master of Arts in Geography: The Master of Arts in Geography is an innovative, 36-credit program. Our curriculum focuses heavily on the themes of social justice, sustainability, globalization and geographic methods. Graduates go on to pursue further graduate study as well as professional positions related to urban and economic development, environmental sustainability and social justice at the local and international scale.
- BA in Geography and Urban Studies + Professional Science Master's in Geographic Information Systems: The PSM in GIS program combines advanced training in GIS core skills with professional development and business ethics to prepare students to enter the GIS workforce. Students learn in-demand technical skills and are introduced to a wide array of software and analytical problems, making them versatile problem solvers and critical thinkers.
- BA in Geography and Urban Studies + Master of Education in Secondary Education: The Master of Education (MEd) in Secondary Education program focuses on the needs and subject areas of today's secondary school students. This graduate program prepares students to teach grades 7 through 12 in their chosen content area such as English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies or World Languages.

Contact Information

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Learn more about the Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Urban Studies.

These requirements are for students who matriculated in academic year 2024-2025. Students who matriculated prior to fall 2024 should refer to the Archives to view the requirements for their Bulletin year.

Summary of Degree Requirements

University Requirements

- MATH 0701 (4 s.h.) and/or ENG 0701 (4 s.h.), if required by placement testing.
- All Temple students must take a minimum of two writing-intensive courses as part of the major. The specific courses required for this major are GUS 2197 and GUS 4198.
- Students must complete requirements of the General Education (GenEd) Program. See the General Education section of the *Undergraduate Bulletin* for more details.

College of Liberal Arts Requirements

- Completion of a minimum of 123 credits, including:
 - 90 credits in CLA/CST courses;
 - 45 credits of which must be at the upper level (numbered 2000-4999).

- For **Social Science majors**, 6 upper level credits (numbered 2000-4999) must be taken in Humanities Subject Areas: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Greek (Ancient), Greek and Roman Classics, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Philosophy, Religion, Russian, and Spanish in the College of Liberal Arts, Art History in the Tyler School of Art and Architecture, or any department in the College of Science and Technology.
- A minimum GPA of 2.0, cumulatively, in CLA/CST coursework, and in the major.
- Only courses in which a student receives a grade of at least C- can satisfy GenEd, major, minor, or CLA Foreign Language and Global Studies requirements.
- **Professional Development Requirement**
 - All students in the College of Liberal Arts are required to take a 1 credit seminar in professional development. CLA 1002 Professional Development for Liberal Arts Majors is the appropriate course option for this major. Other courses that fulfill this requirement may be found on the CLA College Requirements page. Only one course in this category may count towards graduation.
- **Foreign Language/Global Studies Requirements:**
 - All students must complete or test out of the first and second levels of a foreign language - these courses are numbered 1001 and 1002;
 - All students must complete at least one course from the GenEd Global/World Society category; and
 - All Bachelor of Arts students must complete one of the following options:
 - Third semester of a foreign language;
 - Demonstrated proficiency beyond the third semester in a foreign language (placement exam or certification from the language department);
 - Take one Global Studies course from the list on the CLA College Requirements page;
 - Study Abroad at an approved program; or
 - Take a second General Education Global/World Society course.
- **Notes on Foreign Language Study**
 - The third level of language is numbered 1003 in French, Spanish, and Portuguese and numbered 2001 in all other foreign language subjects.
 - Students are strongly encouraged to take the third level of a foreign language as it is the minimum required for election to the prestigious honor society *Phi Beta Kappa*. (Taking the course does not guarantee admission but not taking it guarantees exclusion.)
 - See the College of Liberal Arts Policies section of this *Bulletin* for more information on the Foreign Language Placement, Regression in Coursework, and guidelines for students' other experiences with language.

General Electives are typically one-third of a student's program of study and can be focused on a second major, a minor, or towards some other personal enrichment or professional goals. See an academic advisor for assistance in developing an academic plan for these courses.

Major Requirements (39 credits)

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Gateway Courses		
GUS 2001	Cities	3
GUS 2002	Space and Place	3
Research Methods courses		
GUS 2197	Research Design in Geography and Urban Studies	3
GUS 3062	Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems	3
GUS 3161	Spatial Statistics	3
Research Methods elective		
Select one of the following:		3
GUS 3001	Images of the City in Popular Culture	
GUS 3061	Fundamentals of Cartography	
GUS 3063	Environmental Remote Sensing	
GUS 3064	Qualitative Methods	
GUS 4065	Urban Geographic Information Systems	
International Course		
Select one of the following:		3
GUS 2032	Urban Systems in a Global Economy	
GUS 2073	African Development	
GUS 2074	East and South Asia	
GUS 2121	Russian Cities	

GUS 3021	International Urbanization	
GUS 3052	Environmental Problems in Asia	
GUS 3073	Geography of Travel and Tourism	
GUS 3074	Sicily: The Land, People and Identity	
GUS 3075	Comparative Regional Development	
GUS 3076	Metropolitan Tokyo	
GUS 3928	Honors Metropolitan Tokyo	
GUS 4000	Special Topics in Geography and Urban Studies	
Geography and Urban Studies electives ¹		
Select 1 GUS course numbered 0800-4999		3
Select 4 GUS courses numbered 2000-4999		12
Capstone Course		
GUS 4198	Senior Seminar in Geography and Urban Studies	3
Total Credit Hours		39

¹ No electives may double-count between the Geography & Urban Studies major and either the Environmental Studies major or minor.

Suggested Academic Plan

Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Urban Studies

Suggested Plan for New Students Starting in the 2024-2025 Academic Year

Year 1		
Fall		Credit Hours
ENG 0802	Analytical Reading and Writing [GW]	4
or ENG 0812	or Analytical Reading and Writing: ESL [GW]	
or ENG 0902	or Honors Analytical Reading and Writing [GW]	
GenEd Quantitative Literacy Course ^{GQ}		4
Foreign Language 1001 - first level		4
GenEd Breadth Course		3
Credit Hours		15
Spring		
IH 0851	Intellectual Heritage I: The Good Life [GY]	3
or IH 0951	or Honors Intellectual Heritage I: The Good Life [GY]	
Foreign Language 1002 - second level		4
GenEd Breadth Course		3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
Credit Hours		16
Year 2		
Fall		
GUS 2001	Cities	3
IH 0852	Intellectual Heritage II: The Common Good [GZ]	3
or IH 0952	or Honors Intellectual Heritage II: The Common Good [GZ]	
GenEd Breadth Course		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		2
CLA 1002	Professional Development for Liberal Arts Majors	1
Select one of the following:		3
Foreign Language - third level		
GenEd Global/World Society Course		
Internationally Focused Course From Approved List		
Credit Hours		15
Spring		
GUS 2002	Space and Place	3

GUS 0800-4999 Elective		3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
GenEd Breadth Course		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		3
Credit Hours		15
Year 3		
Fall		
GUS 2197	Research Design in Geography and Urban Studies [WI]	3
GUS 3062	Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems	3
One International Geography & Urban Studies Course From Approved List		3
CLA/CST 2000+ Humanities/CST Course		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		3
One 0800-4999 Elective in Any School or College		2
Credit Hours		17
Spring		
GUS 3161	Spatial Statistics	3
GUS Research Methods Elective Course From Approved List		3
GUS 2000+ Elective		3
CLA/CST 2000+ Humanities/CST Course		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		3
Credit Hours		15
Year 4		
Fall		
GUS 2000+ Elective		3
GUS 2000+ Elective		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		3
CLA/CST 2000+ Elective		3
One 0800-4999 Elective in Any School or College		3
Credit Hours		15
Spring		
GUS 4198	Senior Seminar in Geography and Urban Studies [WI]	3
GUS 2000+ Elective		3
CLA/CST 0800-4999 Elective		9
Credit Hours		15
Total Credit Hours		123

Accelerated Programs

Students may opt to pursue an accelerated +1 program, enabling them to complete both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in less time than the traditional route.

The following accelerated programs may be of interest to students in the Geography and Urban Studies BA:

College of Liberal Arts

- Geographic Information Systems PSM
- Geography MA

College of Education and Human Development

- Secondary Education MEd with Social Studies Education concentration