School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences

Geospatial Information Sciences (BS)

Geospatial Information Science (or GIScience) is the study of relationships between phenomena in space and time. In recent years, powerful new technologies and techniques have emerged that greatly improve our ability to acquire, archive, analyze, and communicate information regarding people, places, and other things on or near the Earth’s surface. These same technologies and techniques allow us to combine this information into multi-tiered databases describing the physical, social, and other aspects of all or portions of the Earth. Such databases can then be analyzed in novel ways that take the data’s explicit spatial (or locational) nature into account. The insights produced by analyzing these types of databases are revolutionizing many fields of science, government, and business. Currently, commonplace consumer products such as web-based mapping systems and GPS units that incorporate locational information are directly impacting the everyday lives of ordinary individuals.

Graduates of the Bachelors of Science in Geospatial Information Science program will understand the logical, mathematical, and technological foundations for compiling and analyzing spatial data. They will be skilled in solving geospatial problems, enabling them to move into professional roles handling the geospatial needs of typical corporate, government, and nonprofit organizations. The graduates will not only be skilled in the use of common GIScience software systems, but also will understand the underlying principles upon which software systems are based. This will allow them to transfer their knowledge from one software system to another, to expand the capabilities of these systems, and most importantly, to view geospatial problems as issues that can be solved by applying basic theories, techniques and methodologies.

Mission and Objectives

The mission of the Bachelor of Science in Geospatial Information Sciences program is to provide students with a rigorous understanding of the fundamental theories and concepts underlying GIScience, as well as to provide them with extensive hands-on experience with contemporary GIScience hardware and software. The goal of the program is to give students a firm grasp of the theories, ideas, and techniques that underlay software and hardware systems for the compilation and analysis of spatially referenced data, and thus provide them with a foundation of knowledge and skill that transcends any individual piece of software or hardware. Graduates of this program will be able to successfully compete for professional positions within GIScience and related fields, and be admitted into the best graduate schools globally.

Students within the program will:

- Demonstrate their understanding of the underlying theories, ideas, concepts and techniques of GIScience.
- Master contemporary computer hardware and software systems commonly employed in GIScience.
- Demonstrate problem solving skills that employ their understanding of theories, ideas and concepts as well as their mastery of GIScience software and hardware.
Bachelor of Science in Geospatial Information Sciences

Degree Requirements [120 semester credit hours]¹

View an Example of Degree Requirements by Semester

Faculty

**Professors:** Brian J. L. Berry, Denis J. Dean, Daniel A. Griffith, Fang Qiu, May Yuan  
**Associate Professors:** Yongwan Chun, Dohyeong Kim, Michael Tiefelsdorf  
**Assistant Professors:** Anthony R. Cummings, Andrew Wheeler  
**Senior Lecturer:** Irina Vakulenko

I. Core Curriculum Requirements: 42 semester credit hours²

**Communication: 6 semester credit hours**

COMM 1311 Survey of Oral and Technology-based Communication  
RHET 1302 Rhetoric

**Mathematics: 3 semester credit hours**

MATH 1325 Applied Calculus I

**Life and Physical Sciences: 6 semester credit hours**
Choose two courses from the following:

GEOS 1303 Physical Geology  
NATS 1311 The Universe, and Everything Else  
NATS 2333 Energy, Water, and the Environment  
PHYS 1301 College Physics I

**Language, Philosophy and Culture: 3 semester credit hours**
Choose one course from the following:

AMS 2341 American Studies for the Twenty-First Century  
HUMA 1301 Exploration of the Humanities  
LIT 2331 Masterpieces of World Literature  
PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy

**Creative Arts: 3 semester credit hours**
Choose one course from the following:

AHST 1303 Survey of Western Art History: Ancient to Medieval  
AHST 1304 Survey of Western Art History: Renaissance to Modern
AHST 2331 Understanding Art  
ARTS 1301 Explorations of the Arts

**American History: 6 semester credit hours**

Choose two courses from the following:

- HIST 1301 U.S. History Survey to Civil War
- HIST 1302 U.S. Survey from Civil War
- HIST 2301 History of Texas

**Government / Political Science: 6 semester credit hours**

- GOVT 2305 American National Government
- GOVT 2306 State and Local Government

**Social and Behavioral Sciences: 3 semester credit hours**

Choose one course from the following:

- CRIM 1301 Introduction to Criminal Justice
- CRIM 1307 Introduction to Crime and Criminology
- ECON 2301 Principles of Macroeconomics
- ECON 2302 Principles of Microeconomics
- SOC 1301 Introduction to Sociology

**Component Area Option: 6 semester credit hours**

- EPPS 2301 Research Design in the Social and Policy Sciences

And choose one course from the following:

- EPPS 2302 Methods of Quantitative Analysis in the Social and Policy Sciences
- EPPS 2303 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics for the Social and Policy Sciences

**II. Major Requirements: 42 semester credit hours**

**Major Preparatory Courses: 9 semester credit hours beyond Core Curriculum**

- ENVR 2302 or GEOG 2302 or GEOS 2302 The Global Environment
- GEOG 2303 People and Place: An Introduction to World Geographic Regions
- GEOG 3377 or PA 3377 Urban Planning and Policy

**Major Core Courses: 18 semester credit hours**

- GISC 2305 or GEOS 2305 Spatial Thinking and Data Analytics

GISC 3304 or GEOG 3304 or GEOS 3304 Principles of Geospatial Information Sciences
GISC 4380 or GEOG 4380 Spatial Concepts and Organization
GISC 4325 or GEOS 4325 Introduction to Remote Sensing
GISC 4382 Applied Geographic Information Systems
GISC 4386 Global Change and Its Challenges

Concentrations: 15 semester credit hours in ONE of the following concentration areas

Geography

GEOG 3331 Urban Growth and Structure
GEOG 3357 Spatial Dimensions of Health and Disease
GEOG 3359 Human Migration and Mobility
GEOG 3372 Population and Development
GEOG 3382 Russia: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

GeoComputation and GeoVisualization

GISC 4317 GeoComputation
GISC 4326 Cartography and GeoVisualization
GISC 4384 Health and Environmental GIS: A Global Perspective
GISC 4385 Advanced Applications in GIS
ITSS 3300 Information Technology for Business

III. Elective Requirements: 36 semester credit hours

Prescribed Electives: 15 semester credit hours

All students are required to take at least fifteen semester credit hours of prescribed upper-division elective courses.

Free Electives: 21 semester credit hours

This requirement may be satisfied with lower- and upper-division courses from any field of study. Students must complete at least 51 semester credit hours of upper-division courses to qualify for graduation.

Minor in Geography: 18 semester credit hours

Required Courses: 9 semester credit hours

GEOG 2302 The Global Environment
GEOG 3304 Principles of Geospatial Information Sciences
GEOG 3370 The Global Economy

Upper-Division Courses: 9 semester credit hours

Any upper-division Geography (GEOG) or Geographic Information Sciences (GISC) courses, excluding GEOG 4V97, GEOG 4V98, and GEOG 4V99.

Minor in Geospatial Information Sciences (GIS): 18 semester credit hours

Required Courses: 9 semester credit hours

GISC 2305 Spatial Thinking and Data Analytics
GISC 3304 or GEOG 3304 Principles of Geospatial Information Sciences
GISC 4325 Introduction to Remote Sensing

Upper-Division Courses: 9 semester credit hours

Any upper-division Geography (GEOG) or Geographic Information Sciences (GISC) courses, excluding GEOG 4V97, GEOG 4V98, and GEOG 4V99.

1. Incoming freshmen must enroll and complete requirements of UNIV 1010 and the corresponding school-related freshman seminar course. Students, including transfer students, who complete their core curriculum at UT Dallas must take UNIV 2020.
2. Curriculum Requirements can be fulfilled by other approved courses from institutions of higher education. The courses listed are recommended as the most efficient way to satisfy both Core Curriculum and Major Requirements at UT Dallas.
3. Alternative courses, as approved by the program head, may be used to satisfy this requirement.

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