

Department of Geosciences

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B.S. and M.S. degrees in Geoscience and a PhD in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences are offered with emphasis in sub-disciplines described below. Minors are offered at both B.S. and M.S. levels in Geoscience.

The Department of Geosciences strives for an integrated, interdisciplinary study of the whole Earth from the bachelor's through the Ph.D. levels. Course offerings are grouped into six areas of emphasis:

1. Professional Geology - physical, biological, and chemical aspects of the Earth;
2. Geography - distribution of physical features and human interaction with the Earth;
3. Environmental Geoscience - conservation and management of Earth resources and remediation of natural and human hazards;
4. Broadcast Meteorology/Climatology - radio/television weathercasting;
5. Professional Meteorology/Climatology - atmospheric processes and climatic variability; and
6. Geographic Information Systems - spatial analysis and topological relationships of geographic data.

Within the six areas of emphasis outlined above, a student may further focus interests in a variety of areas including: water resources, hydrogeology and environmental clean-up and monitoring, petroleum exploration and services, construction and urbanization involving geological applications, geophysics and geochemistry, sedimentary geology and paleontology, Quaternary geology and karst processes, Geographic Information Systems, human or physical geography, or analysis and prediction of weather and climate. A minimum of 40 credit hours in geoscience courses is required for the geoscience degree. A grade of C or higher is required on all departmental courses to satisfy graduation requirements. Students in the professional geology concentration are required to take the Association of State Board of Geologists Fundamentals of Geology (ASBOG-FG) exam.

A minor in geoscience consists of a minimum of 14 credit hours in courses numbered 2000 and above, in addition to the first year courses. The following are examples of variations within a geoscience minor. A minor with a Geology emphasis should include physical (GG 1113/GG 1111) and historical geology (GG 1123/GG 1121) plus 14 hours 2000 and above for a total of 22 hours; for an Environmental Geoscience emphasis, physical and historical geology with laboratory plus introduction to environmental geology (GG 3133) and other course work 2000 and above for a total of 22 hours; for emphasis in Geography, cultural geography (GR 2013), world geography (GR 1123) and other course work 2000 and above; and Broadcast Meteorology/climatology, physical geography (GR 1114) and either introduction to environmental geology (GG 3133) or conservation of natural resources (GR 3113) and other course work 2000 and above for a total of 21 hours. Minors in Geoscience are also available at the M.S. level.

Three educational enhancement awards and seven scholarships are available to students majoring in Geoscience, namely the F.F. Mellen, Forrest W. Pace, and Summer Geology Educational Enhancement awards, and the George W. Bishop, the Paul H. Dunn Memorial, the Ronald Greeley Memorial, the Gordon W. Gulmon, the Sistrunk Endowed, the Mark Worthey Endowed, and the Geosciences Endowed Scholarships. The three Educational Enhancement Awards provide financial assistance to those enrolled in field geology camp during the summer. The seven scholarships are awarded to students for academic excellence. All are restricted to students at junior or senior rank, with the exception of the Sistrunk Endowed, the Worthey Endowed, and the Greeley Memorial Scholarships. The Geosciences Endowed Scholarship is only for graduate students.

The Department of Geosciences encourages involvement in Sigma Gamma Epsilon, a nationally recognized honorary Earth Science society and Gamma Theta Upsilon, international honor society in geography. Requirements for acceptance in Sigma Gamma Upsilon include a grade-point average of at least 3.00 in 12 or more hours of geoscience and a cumulative average of 2.67. Requirements for Gamma Theta Upsilon are a grade-point average of at least 3.3 overall as well as in at least 9 hours of "GR" courses.

The Department of Geosciences participates with the National Weather Association (NWA) and the American Meteorological Society (AMS) in training individuals for the respective "Weathercaster Seals of Approval". The Office of the State Climatologist and the MSU Climatology Laboratory are housed in the Department and are strongly involved in programs for all students with interests in professional and broadcast meteorology and climatology.

Distance Learning Programs

The Department of Geosciences offers four distance learning programs listed below that can lead to a degree in Geosciences. Each program utilizes recorded lectures and the Internet for course instruction.

Broadcast and Operational Meteorology Program. A three-year, 17 course, 53 credit hour program of study that can lead to a B.S. degree in Geosciences. Primarily for individuals in television weather.

Teachers In Geoscience Program. A two-year, 12 course, 36 credit hour program of study that leads to a M.S. degree in Geosciences. Primarily for K-12 teachers. An additional two-year, 10 course, 30 credit hour program of advance course work is available.

Applied Meteorology Program. A two-year, 12 course 36 credit hour program of study that leads to a M.S. degree in Geosciences. Primarily for individuals with meteorological, environmental, or hazards-related careers.

Environmental Geoscience Program. A 30-credit hour, non-thesis program that leads to a M.S. degree in Geosciences. It is designed for students interested in graduate study of a broad cross-section of the geosciences and is offered both on-campus and through distance education.

Geosciences Major

General Education and College Requirements

English Composition

EN 1103	English Composition I	3
or EN 1163	Accelerated Composition I	
EN 1113	English Composition II	3
or EN 1173	Accelerated Composition II	

Foreign Language

2 semesters - one Foreign Language (see advisor)		6
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Humanities

Literature - see General Education courses		3
History - see General Education courses		3

Mathematics

Specified under concentration areas		6
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Fine Arts

CO 1503	Introduction to the Theatre (for Broadcast Meteorology)	3
See A&S Core requirements (for other concentrations)		

Natural Sciences

Specified under concentration areas		9-12
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Social Sciences

GR 1123	Introduction to World Geography	3
CO 1403	Introduction to the Mass Media (for Broadcast Meteorology)	3
see Gen. Ed./A&S Core (other concentrations)		3

Major Core

Basic Courses

GG 1113	Survey of Earth Sciences I	4
& GG 1111	and Earth Sciences I Laboratory	
or GR 1114	Elements of Physical Geography	

Oral Communication Requirement

CO 1003	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3
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Choose one of the following concentrations:

Professional Geology Concentration (GEOL)

The Professional Geology concentration is designed to prepare students for entry-level employment in the environmental consulting industry; state and federal government agencies; as well as energy and extraction industries, such as oil, gas, and coal. The Professional Geology degree also prepares students for application to a graduate program.

Mathematics

MA 1713	Calculus I	3
MA 1723	Calculus II	3

Natural Sciences

CH 1213	Chemistry I	3
CH 1211	Investigations in Chemistry I	1
CH 1223	Chemistry II	3
CH 1221	Investigations in Chemistry II	1
PH 1113	General Physics I	3
PH 1123	General Physics II	3

PH 1133	General Physics III	3
or GG 4233	Applied Geophysics	
or GG 4633	Introduction to Geochemistry	

Concentration Requirements

GG 1121	Earth Sciences II Laboratory	1
GG 1123	Survey of Earth Sciences II	3
GG 3133	Introduction to Environmental Geology	3
GG 3613	Water Resources ¹	3
GG 4114	Mineralogy	4
GG 4123	Petrology	3
GG 4201	Practicum on Paleontology	1
GG 4304	Principles of Sedimentary Deposits I	4
GG 4413	Structural Geology	3
GG 4333	Geowriting ²	3
GG 4443	Principles of Sedimentary Deposits II	3
GG 4503	Geomorphology	3
GR 2313	Maps and Remote Sensing	3
GR 4303	Principles of GIS	3
GR 4633	Statistical Climatology	3
or ST 2113	Introduction to Statistics	
or ST 3123	Introduction to Statistical Inference	
GG 4446	Summer Geology Field Camp	6
Choose one of the following:		3
GG 4113	Micropaleontology	
GG 4133	Principles of Paleocology	
GG 4203	Principles of Paleobiology	
Choose two of the following:		6
GG 1133	Planetary Geology	
GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	
GG 4523	Coastal Environments	
GR 1604	Weather and Climate	
Choose three additional courses from the following lists:		
Environmental Professional Emphasis		
GG 4613	Physical Hydrogeology	
GG 4633	Introduction to Geochemistry	
GG 4153	Engineering Geology	
Petroleum Professional Emphasis		
GG 4233	Applied Geophysics	
GG 4433	Subsurface Methods	
GG 4063	Earth and Atmospheric Energy Resources	
Geospatial Professional Emphasis		
GR 4313	Advanced GIS	
GR 4333	Remote Sensing of the Physical Environment	
GR 4343	Advanced Remote Sensing in Geosciences	
GR 4363	Geographic Information Systems Programming	

Total Hours 124

- ¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.
- ² Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement and Writing Requirement.
- ³ From an approved university. See advisor.

Environmental Geoscience Concentration (ENGS)

The Environmental Geoscience concentration is designed to be a flexible degree that provides a broad cross-section of the geosciences with emphasis on environmental stewardship. The degree can be molded with the assistance of an academic adviser to suit individual goals of students that do not readily align with other geosciences curricula. The degree prepares students to work as a geoscientist or prepares students for graduate school in the geosciences or other related fields.

Mathematics

MA 1313	College Algebra	3
MA 1323	Trigonometry	3

Natural Sciences

Science with lab (CH, PH, BIO)		6-8
Science without lab (CH, PH, BIO)		3

Concentration Requirements

GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	3
GG 3613	Water Resources ¹	3
GG 4333	Geowriting ²	3
GR 1604	Weather and Climate	4
GR 4633	Statistical Climatology ¹	3
or ST 2113	Introduction to Statistics	
or ST 3123	Introduction to Statistical Inference	
4000 level departmental courses		18
Choose one of the following:		3
GG 1133	Planetary Geology	
GG 3133	Introduction to Environmental Geology	
GG 4523	Coastal Environments	
GR 2313	Maps and Remote Sensing	
GR 3113	Conservation of Natural Resources	
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes	

General Electives

Consult advisor		36-38
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Total Hours		124
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¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.

² Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement and Writing Requirement.

Geography Concentration (GPHY)

This program prepares students to work in a variety of fields across the social and natural sciences. A geography degree can provide the multidisciplinary foundation necessary for careers in government, environmental management, education, planning, and development. People with geography degrees have found employment with: the US Census Bureau, National Parks Service, the National Forest Service, and other federal government agencies, non-profit organizations focusing on community and international development, the environmental assessment industry, the GIS/geospatial industry, environmental and historical interpretation, and urban and regional planning. Our students also receive a strong foundation for further graduate studies in geography and related disciplines.

Mathematics

MA 1313	College Algebra	3
MA 1323	Trigonometry	3

Natural Sciences

Science with lab (CH, PH, BIO)		6-9
Science without lab (CH, PH, BIO)		3

Concentration Requirements

GG 4333	Geowriting ¹	3
GR 1604	Weather and Climate	4
GR 2013	Cultural Geography	3
GR 2313	Maps and Remote Sensing	3

GR 4203	Geography of North America	3
GR 4303	Principles of GIS	3
GR 4633	Statistical Climatology	3
or ST 2113	Introduction to Statistics	
or ST 3123	Introduction to Statistical Inference	
4000 level departmental courses		12
Choose four of the following:		12
GG 3133	Introduction to Environmental Geology	
GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	
GG 3613	Water Resources ²	
GG 4523	Coastal Environments	
GR 3113	Conservation of Natural Resources	
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes	
Choose four of the following:		12
GR 4123	Urban Geography	
GR 4213	Geography of Latin America	
GR 4223	Geography of Europe	
GR 4233	Geography of Asia	
GR 4243	Geography of Russia and the Former Soviet Republics	
GR 4253	Geography of Africa	
GR 4263	Geography of the South	
GR 4283	Geography of Islamic World	
General Electives		
Consult Advisor		14-17
Total Hours		124

¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement and Writing Requirement

² Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.

Broadcast Meteorology Concentration (BMP)

This program focuses on preparing students for a career in radio/television weathercasting. The coursework does not meet the requirements for the American Meteorological Society's Certified Broadcast Meteorological Seal of Approval because it lacks some of the math and physics requirements. Individuals can, however, be qualified to earn the National Weather Association Seal of Approval after working in the industry for three years.

Mathematics

MA 1713	Calculus I	3
MA 1723	Calculus II	3

Natural Sciences

CH 1043	Survey of Chemistry I	3
PH 1113	General Physics I (w/ lab)	3
PH 1123	General Physics II (w/ lab)	3

Concentration Requirements

GR 1604	Weather and Climate	4
GR 4422	Weather Forecasting I	2
GR 4432	Weather Forecasting II	2
GR 4623	Physical Meteorology	3
GR 4633	Statistical Climatology ¹	3
or ST 3123	Introduction to Statistical Inference	
GR 4643	Physical Climatology	3
GR 4733	Synoptic Meteorology	3
GR 4783	Satellite Meteorology	3
or GR 4883	Radar Meteorology	
GR 4823	Dynamic Meteorology I	3

GR 4963	Mesoscale Meteorology	3
GR 4502	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology I	2
GR 4512	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology II	2
GR 4522	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology III	2
GR 4532	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology IV	2
CO 2013	Voice and Articulation	3
CO 3313	News Writing for the Electronic Media ²	3
CO 2333	Television Production	3
CO 3333	Advanced Television Production	3
Choose four of the following:		12
GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	
GG 3613	Water Resources	
GG 4523	Coastal Environments	
GR 3113	Conservation of Natural Resources	
GR 4303	Principles of GIS	
GR 4203	Geography of North America	
GR 4553	Computer Methods in Meteorology	
GR 4613	Applied Climatology	
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes	
GR 4883	Radar Meteorology (if not taken as Concentration course)	
or GR 4783	Satellite Meteorology	
GR 4943	Tropical Meteorology	
GR 4933	Dynamic Meteorology II	
General Electives		
Consult Advisor		14
Total Hours		124

¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.

² Fulfills Writing Requirement.

Professional Meteorology Concentration (PMET)

This program focuses on the study of atmospheric processes and climatic variability. Upon completion of the program (operational emphasis), students will have met the coursework requirements for the National Weather Service, the private meteorology sector, or continue their education in graduate school. Students choosing the program with the broadcast emphasis can also work for the National Weather Service and also earn the American Meteorological Society's Certified Broadcast Meteorologist Seal of Approval.

Mathematics

MA 1713	Calculus I	3
MA 1723	Calculus II	3
MA 2733	Calculus III	3
MA 3253	Differential Equations I	3

Natural Sciences

CH 1213	Chemistry I	3
CH 1211	Investigations in Chemistry I	1
PH 2213	Physics I	3
PH 2223	Physics II	3

Concentration Requirements

GG 4333	Geowriting ^{2, 3}	3
or CO 3313	News Writing for the Electronic Media	
GR 1604	Weather and Climate	4
GR 4422	Weather Forecasting I	2
GR 4432	Weather Forecasting II	2
GR 4623	Physical Meteorology	3
GR 4633	Statistical Climatology ¹	3

or ST 3123	Introduction to Statistical Inference	
GR 4643	Physical Climatology	3
GR 4733	Synoptic Meteorology	3
GR 4783	Satellite Meteorology	3
or GR 4883	Radar Meteorology	
GR 4823	Dynamic Meteorology I	3
GR 4933	Dynamic Meteorology II	3
GR 4963	Mesoscale Meteorology	3
Choose four of the following:		12
GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	
GG 3613	Water Resources	
GR 4363	Geographic Information Systems Programming ¹	
GG 4523	Coastal Environments	
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes	
GR 3113	Conservation of Natural Resources	
GR 4203	Geography of North America	
GR 4303	Principles of GIS	
GR 4553	Computer Methods in Meteorology	
GR 4613	Applied Climatology	
GR 4883	Radar Meteorology (if not taken as Concentration course)	
or GR 4783	Satellite Meteorology	
GR 4943	Tropical Meteorology	
Specified Electives		
See advisor		20-21
AMS (Broadcast Meteorology)		
GR 4502	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology I	2
GR 4512	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology II	2
GR 4522	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology III	2
GR 4532	Practicum in Broadcast Meteorology IV	2
CO 2013	Voice and Articulation	3
CO 2333	Television Production	3
CO 3333	Advanced Television Production	3
GIS		
GR 2313	Maps and Remote Sensing	3
GR 3303	Survey of Geospatial Technologies	3
GR 4303	Principles of GIS	3
GR 4313	Advanced GIS	3
GR 4323	Cartographic Sciences	3
GR 4333	Remote Sensing of the Physical Environment	3
GR 4353	Geodatabase Design	3
ROTC		
AS 1012	Foundations of U.S. Air Force-I	2
AS 1022	Foundations of U.S. Air Force-II	2
AS 2012	Air and Space Power-I	2
AS 2022	Air and Space Power-II	2
AS 3013	Air Force Leadership Studies-I	3
AS 3023	Air Force Leadership Studies-II	3
AS 4013	National Security Affairs and Preparation for Active Duty-I	3
AS 4023	National Security Affairs and Preparation for Active Duty-II	3
General Electives		
Consult advisor		0-1
Total Hours		124

- ¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.
² Fulfills Writing Requirement.
³ CO 3313 must be taken for the Broadcast Meteorology emphasis

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Concentration

This program provides a fundamental background in the geospatial sciences, including geographic information systems, remote sensing, spatial analysis, database management, geospatial modeling, and spatial programming. The geospatial sciences are applicable to many different fields and will prepare students for careers in: government agencies, urban and regional planning, environmental management, intelligence, natural areas management, local government, transportation planning and many others. This program also prepares students for further graduate studies in geospatial disciplines.

Mathematics

MA 1313	College Algebra	3
MA 1323	Trigonometry	3

Natural Sciences

Science with lab (CH, PH, BIO)		6-9
Science without lab (CH, PH, BIO)		3

Concentration Requirements

GR 1604	Weather and Climate	4
GR 2313	Maps and Remote Sensing	3
GR 3303	Survey of Geospatial Technologies	3
GR 3113	Conservation of Natural Resources	3
GR 4303	Principles of GIS	3
GR 4313	Advanced GIS	3
GR 4323	Cartographic Sciences	3
GR 4333	Remote Sensing of the Physical Environment	3
GR 4353	Geodatabase Design	3
GG 4333	Geowriting ²	3
4000-level departmental courses		12
CSE 1284	Introduction to Computer Programming	4
ST 3123	Introduction to Statistical Inference	3
or GR 4633	Statistical Climatology	
GR 4343	Advanced Remote Sensing in Geosciences	3
GR 4363	Geographic Information Systems Programming	3
PSS 4411	Remote Sensing Seminar	1
Choose two of the following:		6
GG 3133	Introduction to Environmental Geology	
GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	
GG 3613	Water Resources ¹	
GG 4523	Coastal Environments	
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes	

General Electives

Consult advisor		9-12
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Total Hours		124
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- ¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.
² Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement and Writing Requirement.

Broadcast Meteorology Concentration (Distance Learning only)

Mathematics

See A&S Core requirements

Natural Sciences

See A&S Core requirements

Concentration Requirements

GR 1604	Weather and Climate	4
GR 4443	Weather Prediction I	3
GR 4453	Weather Prediction II	3
GR 4473	Numerical Weather Prediction	3
GR 4613	Applied Climatology	3
GR 4623	Physical Meteorology	3
GR 4633	Statistical Climatology	3
GR 4643	Physical Climatology	3
GR 4713	Synoptic Meteorology I	3
or GR 4733	Synoptic Meteorology	
GR 4753	Satellite and Radar Meteorology	3
GR 4813	Natural Hazards and Processes	3
GR 4913	Thermodynamic Meteorology	3
or GR 4823	Dynamic Meteorology I	
GR 4923	Severe Weather	3
or GR 4963	Mesoscale Meteorology	
GG 3603	Introduction to Oceanography	3
GG 3613	Water Resources	3
GG 4333	Geowriting ²	3
or CO 3313	News Writing for the Electronic Media	
General Electives		24-26
Total Hours		124

¹ Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement.

² Fulfills Computer Literacy Requirement and Writing Requirement.