Geography MA Program
Orientation

Department of Geography and Planning
University at Albany
The Non-Thesis Option

- 36 Credits minimum including:
  - 24 units with a GOG prefix
  - GOG 500, GOG 502, GOG 596
  - 3 courses in an area of specialization
  - Up to 12 credits in a cognate field
  - Satisfactory completion of written comprehensive exam
The Thesis Option

- 30 Credits minimum including:
  - 24 units with a GOG prefix
  - GOG 500, GOG 502, GOG 596
  - 3-4 credits thesis paper
  - 3 courses in an area of specialization
  - Up to 6 credits in a cognate field
  - Satisfactory completion of written comprehensive exam and defense of seminar/thesis
Specialization Tracks

- Human Geography
- Physical Geography
- Geographic Information Systems
- See the graduate catalog for specific course requirements
The Thesis Paper

- The thesis paper should reflect original research in your chosen area.
- It is a formal document that will be bound and submitted to the University Library.
- You defend your paper before your committee consisting of 3 faculty members of your choosing.
Selecting an Advisor

- All incoming students are advised by the M.A. program director.
- Students select their individual graduate advisor during their first semester.
- The advisor will help the student:
  - select specialization courses and electives.
  - supervise the final research project and chair the final oral exam (if thesis track).
Selecting a Thesis Committee

- The committee will
  - evaluate the thesis paper
  - administer the oral defense
- The student selects the committee members from the Department of Geography and Planning faculty
The Comprehensive Exam

- The “comps” are often given near the end of semesters
  - Watch for posted information
- They are typically essay exams that test you on your overall knowledge of geography as a discipline
- Material for the test is drawn from the MA core courses
Graduate GISSA Certificate

- 15 credit program
- Courses in the program can also be applied toward the MA
In Closing

- This presentation is online at www.albany.edu/faculty/jmower
  - Follow the link for MA Program Orientation
- Link to Department’s home page
- Link to official MA program description
- Have fun!