

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 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 beginning and 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



Assistantships and Internships

- Full-time assistantships require a 20 hour per week work commitment
- Part-time requires 10 hours
- Internship duties are negotiated between yourself and the appropriate agency



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!