

## **Educational Goals**

The Department seeks to ensure that each undergraduate major:

1. Will acquire a general level of understanding of the physical, environmental, urban and cultural processes that are responsible for the unique geography of the world;
2. Will acquire a high level of knowledge in one major area of geography;
3. Will have access to an undergraduate advisor who advises them on their undergraduate requirements, and will be directed to a personal advisor in their area of interest who advises them on research, internship and employment opportunities, and graduate school;
4. Will have a functional understanding of various research methods and approaches, including quantitative methods (statistics), field study methods, GIS and related technologies, archival methods (archived documents and manuscripts), survey methods (questionnaire design and interpretation), the scientific method and testing, and advanced writing;
5. Will be exposed to internship experiences and outside speakers in the field.

## **Geography Undergraduate Major Assessment Methods**

The following are the assessment methods that will be applied in Spring 2004, based on feedback from the initial 2003 exercise.

1. Each student is expected to meet with their personal advisor at least once per year to discuss their progress and goals.
2. The faculty member teaching Geography 600 will evaluate the “geographic understanding” of each senior on the basis on a course paper and formal presentation at a departmental colloquium.
3. All seniors will complete an exit survey before graduation as part of Geography 600. The students will compile, analyze, and discuss the survey results in class. They will also be responsible for reporting them to the faculty.
4. Faculty will examine the survey results and prepare a formal response each year addressing the issues raised. The faculty response will be conveyed to students via email.

## STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE GEOGRAPHY MAJOR 2003 PROCESS REPORT

During the spring of 2003, majors in the Department of Geography at UW-Milwaukee developed and pre-tested a protocol for evaluating the undergraduate major program. Geography students enrolled in the capstone course (416-600) were responsible for: (1) defining “outcomes/goals” for the major; (2) identifying a suitable evaluation method; and (3) proposing an approach for reporting results.

### *Outcomes/Goals*

Working from a list of “goals” for the major devised by the Department in 2000, students put forward the following:

***The Department seeks to ensure that each major.....***

1. Will acquire a general level of understanding of the physical, environmental, urban and cultural processes that are responsible for the unique geography of the world.
2. Will acquire a high level of knowledge in one specific area of geography.
3. Will be connected to a personal advisor in their field of interest who advises them on their undergraduate requirements, internship and employment opportunities, and graduate school requirements.
4. Will have a functional understanding of various research methods and approaches, including quantitative methods (statistics), field study methods, GIS & related technologies, archival methods (archived documents & manuscripts), survey methods (questionnaire design & interpretation), the scientific method & testing, and advanced writing;
5. Will be exposed to internship experiences and outside speakers in the field.

### *Assessment Approach*

Students recommended that a survey containing questions related to the outcomes/goals (above) be completed by majors in the capstone course on an annual basis to gather data for the evaluation.

### *Reporting*

Needless to say, students in the capstone course wanted survey respondents to remain anonymous. They also wanted to be responsible for summarizing the results of the surveys and reporting them to faculty, although they did point out that a graduate representative selected by the class could also report the results. Lastly, students proposed that the results of the survey be distributed to Majors via e-mail, along with a response to the survey prepared by the faculty.

## STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE GEOGRAPHY MAJOR

As part of the continuing efforts of the Department of Geography of the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee to assess the success and performance of its major programs, each prospective graduating major student is asked to complete this questionnaire. Please answer the questions on this form with careful consideration. Your insights, taken in conjunction with those of your peers, constitute one of the most valuable sources of information that can be used to maintain and improve the quality of the Geography curriculum at UWM.

Please bear in mind the following points:

1. Direct your comments to your experience in the Geography major as a whole, not just to Geography 600.
2. Please be assured that your answers will have no bearing on your grade in this or any other course. Furthermore, the questionnaires will be placed in the custody of the department, not your instructor. The purpose of the questionnaire is only to gather information, so please be honest. Your answers will bring no personal consequences on you.
3. Students in Geography 600 will be responsible for summarizing the results of the surveys and reporting them to the faculty (they can be reported by a graduate representative selected by the class)
4. Faculty will respond to student comments via e-mail and the results will be kept on file.

Year of intended graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer all of the questions. If you require more space for an answer, you may attach a separate sheet.

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1. The department hopes that each graduating major has acquired a general level of understanding of the physical, environmental, urban and cultural processes that are responsible for the unique geography of the world. How do you evaluate your education within the Geography major in the regard?
2. The department expects that each graduating major will have acquired a high level of knowledge in one specific area of geography. How do you evaluate your education within the Geography major in this regard?
3. The department intends that each geography student is connected to a personal advisor in their field of interest who advises them on their undergraduate requirements, internship and employment opportunities, and graduate school requirements. How do you evaluate the department in this regard?

4. The department seeks to ensure that each major has a functional understanding of various research methods and approaches. Please evaluate the department's effectiveness with regard to educating you on the following methods/approaches (circle n/a if the question is not applicable to you).

VERY EFFECTIVE

NOT EFFECTIVE

1

2

3

4

5

n/a

- Quantitative methods (statistics)
- Field study methods
- GIS & related technologies
- Archival methods (archived documents & manuscripts)
- Survey methods (questionnaire design & interpretation)
- The scientific method & testing
- Advanced writing

*COMMENTS:*

5. The department seeks to ensure that each major be exposed to internship experiences and outside speakers in the field. How do you evaluate your education within the Geography major in this regard?
6. How can the Geography major be improved?
7. What is your general assessment of your experience within the UWM major program?