

# *ADDENDUM*

*Reflection Report  
Degree Program in Geography  
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**1. Provide evidence of how the program objectives identified in the degree program proposal are being met.**

Context and History of Program: The BA in Geography is one of the newest degree programs on campus and became effective in April, 2007. Presently it is one of three degree programs offered in the Department of Geography and Anthropology. There are seven full-time tenure track professors and five part-time professors that support the program, offering a total of 30 different courses. In November 2007 there were fourteen declared geography majors. We are presently streamlining the curriculum (addressed in #4 below) to boost retention and graduation rates.

Mission and Objectives of the Program: The Department of Geography and Anthropology's mission is to prepare students for better global citizenship by educating students about the world and its peoples. We believe geographic knowledge helps us understand various aspects of the world, including the patterns and processes that have shaped human interactions, the relationships between people and places, the physical features of the landscape, and the role humans have had in modifying the landscape. The Department offers a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Geography at Kennesaw State University (KSU) that provides students the breadth and depth of geographic knowledge that will create graduates who are well-educated and responsible global citizens.

Given KSU's central mission to offer a comprehensive and coherent general education program that promotes internationalized and connected learning of the liberal arts traditions, there is perhaps no more relevant major than a BA in Geography. Specifically, the program is helping to achieve the goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan for Global Learning. These goals of developing knowledge in global awareness and international perspectives; fostering skills in cross cultural communication and engagement; and instilling values through global ethics, social justice & sustainable development are integrated throughout the curriculum. Concurrently, the faculty are committed to effective teaching and learning by instituting new pedagogies and experiential learning. Students have the opportunity to learn about and engage in service learning projects and participate in research with faculty that ultimately strengthens learning opportunities and addresses public interests. To support our graduates post-baccalaureate, the program emphasizes preparation of our students for careers in geography and/or graduate study in geography or related fields.

How the program objectives are being met. The faculty in the program have been especially adept at meeting objectives of the Quality Enhancement Plan for Global

Learning. This is the track record of past successes in Study Abroad and is an indicator of future performance:

Study Abroad:

- Our faculty initiated and facilitated the KSU Study Abroad Program: Argentina
- Our faculty have participated in the KSU Study Abroad Program: France
- Our faculty have participated in the KSU Study Abroad Program: Italy
- Our faculty have developed and led a USG Faculty Development Seminar to Mexico
- Our faculty have developed a USG Faculty Development Seminar to Argentina

In addition, nearly half the geography courses in the program are predominately global learning in content.

**Table 1**  
**Global Learning Courses in Geography**

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Total Courses Listed</b>	<b>Predominant Global Learning Courses</b>
Geography	30	11

Examples of Geography Courses that Focus Predominately on Global Issues

1. GEOG 1101 – World Regional Geography
2. GEOG 2105 – Social Issues in Geography
3. GEOG 3310 – Historical Geography
4. GEOG 3312 – Geography of Europe
5. GEOG 3320 - Political Geography
6. GEOG 3330 – Economic Geography
7. GEOG 3340 – Cultural Geography
8. GEOG 3350 – Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa
9. GEOG 3360 – Geography of China
10. GEOG 3370 – Geography of Latin America and the Caribbean
11. GEOG 4499 – Senior Seminar in Geography

Departmental Culture and the QEP: Three of the seven tenure-track geography faculty hail from countries outside the US. These include Canada, Colombia, and Trinidad.

**2. Provide evidence that the program is meeting the justification and needs outlined in the degree program proposal.**

Addressing a Societal Need

Geography has been described as “the bridge between the human and physical sciences” and “the mother of all sciences” in that it is a dynamic, comprehensive discipline that seeks to recognize and rationalize the spatial connections between and among people, places, and physical landscapes and landforms. While geography is commonly divided into the three distinct subfields (human, physical and technical), the actual subject of study is limitless provided the spatial component is present.

<http://geography.about.com/od/studygeography/a/geographydfn.htm>

The holistic and spatial approach of Geography provides the student with a basic grasp of the cultural, economic and physical forces that are rapidly changing the world’s landscapes. Geography sets the stage for understanding the social sciences because the issues or phenomena addressed by these disciplines all play out on a geographic landscape. In the age of increasing globalization, geography and geographic knowledge are becoming ever more important in all aspects of society. Geographic knowledge helps us understand various aspects of the world, including the patterns and processes that have shaped human interactions, the relationships between people and places, the physical features of the landscape, and the role humans have had in modifying the landscape.

The Association of American Geographers expresses the needs of geography knowledge in employment sectors in the following ways:

A Need at all Levels of Government. The county governments and state government of Georgia need this program to provide highly trained geography staff for work in many offices, including but not limited to state economic development and planning offices, law enforcement, conducting research in recreation and park use, and mapping land use from satellite images. Many geographers at the federal level work for the National Imagery and Mapping Agency, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Department of State.

A Need in the Private Sector. The private sector needs geographers who can develop and apply geographic ideas and technologies to complex real world systems. Geographers also conduct marketing studies, selecting transportation routes in delivering products to market, understand international markets, and determine environmental risks associated with site locations. From transportation agencies to electric utility companies, and from forestry to telecommunications, real-time mobile interactive geographic technologies and databases are emerging as the backbone of large-scale operations management systems for industries with distributed assets and mobile workforces.

A Need in Education. Schools need K-12 teachers with solid geography backgrounds since all states have recently introduced higher standards for geography instruction. At the college level, exciting new courses attract large numbers of students, and the demand for faculty with regional specialties or theoretical and research capabilities is strong.

Examples of employability of geography graduates are apparent, as geography majors tend to possess the following skills:

- knowledge of the earth's physical environments and their interrelationship
- understanding of the interrelationship of social, economic, political, and cultural factors
- skills in the analysis and use of standard statistical methods
- skills in writing carefully reasoned reports and academic essays
- good visualization skills
- skills in operating computer equipment
- skills in the spatial analysis of socioeconomic patterns, problems and forces
- ability to use land use data
- ability to critically analyze global and local issues

The Association of American Geographers has shown that the potential for practicing geography in private enterprise and government has grown considerably in recent years, although few such positions are designated with the title of geographer. Over 130 potential jobs are listed, and range from air pollution specialist to zoning inspector. (<http://geography.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=geography&zu=http%3A%2F%2Fdepts.washington.edu%2Fgeogjobs%2FwhatcanDO.html>)

Kennesaw State University's service area is the north metro area and Northwest Georgia, precisely the area that needs employees trained in the professional skills of human-society geography (cultural, economic, political, urban), physical-environmental geography (biogeography, climatology, landforms, environmental systems), and geospatial technologies (Geographic Information Systems, Geographic Information Technology, Remote Sensing).

While geography students have much leeway in designing their own programs under the new curriculum, what follows are three examples of suggested foci designed to prepare students to meet employment needs in specific areas of business, government and social services, or for specific graduate programs in geography and related fields:

1. **Regional and Cultural Geography:** One of geography's main themes is that of region, or realm. This suggested focus is for students who wish to build a specified body of knowledge about a realm of their choice. This course of study offers students a holistic view into that realm, the background of which they will gain in Area F (World Regional Geography, Vegetation and Climate, and Introductory Anthropology). After taking the courses in Area F, students may then select a choice among the North American, European, African, Latin American, or Asian Realms. They will build knowledge of cultural landscapes through language study and a choice of literature, history, political science, or anthropology courses to give them specified knowledge. A study abroad component is encouraged.
2. **Physical and Environmental Geography:** This suggested focus provides students an in-depth analysis of the physical environment and the interaction of humans with

natural systems. Building on the basic course in physical geography, courses continue the study of the physical geography of environmental systems at the global, national, regional, and local scales. Students studying Physical Geography and Environmental Systems develop skills in fieldwork, computer mapping and geographic information systems (GIS), and gain knowledge on climate, landforms, water resources, and/or environmental policy. A study abroad experience or internship with a state or regional environmental or planning agency can provide valuable experience. This sequence prepares students for careers in environmental management, and consulting, conservation, land use analysis, map production, geospatial technologies, education, regional planning or resource management. It is also very useful for students planning to attend graduate school in geography, planning, business, and law, or those wishing to become researchers in the atmospheric sciences, hydrology, biogeography, geomorphology, the environmental science and/or geosciences.

- 3. The Geography of Cities and Suburbs:** This focus provides students with the opportunity to examine urban and suburban phenomena from a geographic perspective. Students explore concepts in urban morphology, land-use patterns, economic development, cultural diversity and diffusion, politics at the urban and suburban scale, emerging environmental movements, and the interconnections among cities at regional, national, and global scales. Students opting for this track are able to draw on KSU's strength as a suburban university and a growing national interest in suburban studies in their course work. Further, students have access to original and applied research, as well as such venues as the Suburban Studies Conference. We highly recommend students take advantage of study abroad and internship opportunities. Students will build on their geographic knowledge to prepare for careers in geography and/or for graduate school in geography.

**3. Identify any challenges that have arisen around program delivery, costs, or facilities (if any). If challenges are identified, indicate specific action plans and timetable to address them, including resources needed to accomplish these plans.**

We are facing a critical shortage of part-time instructors for our lower-division courses. This is the only challenge that has arisen around program delivery. There have been no challenges regarding costs. Regarding facilities, we enjoy excellent space in the new Social Sciences building where we have a physical geography lab (SO-4080, shared with anthropology) and a first-rate Geographic Information Systems lab (SO-3022). The lab allows for teaching and research in weather, climate, biogeography, geomorphology, and watershed biogeochemistry. Future grants will provide a state-of-the art meteorological lab on campus grounds as well as a fume hood for geochemical analyses of soils and water nutrients.

- 4. Indicate whether enrollment in the program is on track (based on projected enrollment in degree program proposal). If enrollment is below original projections, specify the action plans and timetable to address productivity.**

Projected Enrollment: The following table was taken from the Geography BA proposal that was submitted to the Board of Regents in January 2007 –

**Table 2: Projected Growth of Students in the Geography BA**

<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>
30	50	75	90	100
Initial Cohort	67% increase	50% increase	20% increase	11% increase

As of November 19, 2007 there were only 14 officially declared geography majors. We are streamlining the curriculum to allow for greater simplicity and more choice for students to design their own programs based on their geography and professional interests. Students may still select courses under the previous concentrations, in addition they will be allowed to select more courses from our array of geographic techniques courses. The Related Studies and Free Electives number of courses has been increased to appeal to transfer students and those wishing to change majors. The proposed curriculum meets the KSU requirements of a minimum of 24 semester hours of upper division courses and 39 semester hours of upper division work overall. This is designed to align with the strategic plans of the Georgia System, KSU, and CHSS to increase retention and graduation rates. With the new curriculum, we hope to meet the original targets mentioned in the proposal.