Recommendations
B.A./B.S. Geography

To learn more about how to make the most of your educational experiences within and beyond the classroom contact:
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PARTICIPATE

Community Service

Sites/experiences
- Carolina Science Outreach
- Community Based Research
- Service Saturdays
- Students Advocating a Greener Environment (SAGE)
- City Serve
- Green Dorm Room Certification Program
- Alternative Breaks

Why this is important
Geography is sometimes defined as the study of the earth as the home of humans. Community service engagement fosters an awareness of human problems, illustrates in a concrete way some of the concepts and issues examined in geography, and gives students the opportunity to share their knowledge with the community.

Global Learning

Related course
For those wanting to learn more about the world from Columbia, we offer GEOG121 (Lands and Peoples of the World), GEOG210 (Peoples, Places, and Environments), and regional geography courses of Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East (GEOG223-228).

Timing for “study abroad”
Study Abroad allows you to earn academic credits toward your USC degree while seeing the world. Geography majors often choose to study abroad to enhance their academic experience, both through semester-long experiences and as shorter summer courses. You can study a variety of topics overseas including resource management, ecotourism, environmental conservation and education, development, and geographic information science. Maymester courses work well and are often available.

Destinations
Our majors have recently undertaken study abroad experiences in Spain, New Zealand, Egypt, Costa Rica, and Bonaire, among others, but we encourage students to seek out destinations and topics that best fit their interests.

Oppportunities
- International House at Maxcy College
- National Student Exchange
- Intern Abroad
- Research Abroad
- Teach Abroad

Why this is important
Global study opportunities connect course material in geography to real-world experiences in other countries and help students draw comparisons between their own cultural norms and institutions and those of other cultures.

How students can get started
Talk to your advisor about Maymester travel course opportunities through the department.

Peer Leadership

Student Organization(s)
- Students Advocating a Greener Environment (SAGE)
- Magellan Scholar Program
- Student Ambassadors
- University 101 Peer Leader

Opportunities
Gamma Theta Upsilon - Geography Honor Society

Why this is important
Leadership activities train students to be leaders in all walks of life, and help them to draw connections between geography course material and real-world leadership.
Internships

Related Courses
GEOG595: Internship in Geography

Recommended sites/work experiences
Geography majors at USC have had a wide range of exciting and unique internship opportunities. Students have interned at federal, state, and local government agencies including the National Park Service, National Weather Service, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina State Climatologist’s Office, South Carolina Department of Transportation and Richland County Soil and Water District. They have also worked with private and commercial interests, including ESRI (the maker of ArcGIS software) and local real estate and homeowners associations. Internally, undergraduates regularly work with the USC Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute, the South Carolina Geographic Alliance, and the Carolina’s Integrated Science Assessment lab.

Why this is important
Internships can be an important asset to your overall educational experience. Internship experiences often help you confirm your career interests, give you hands-on experience in a professional setting, help build your resume, reinforce what you’ve learned in class, and can lead to full-time employment.

How students can get started
Join the Geography Department Facebook page. Make sure you are on the Geography distribution list and watch for internship opportunities in emails.

Research

Related courses
GEOG498: Directed Research

Sample research projects or topics
Examples of recent undergraduate projects and theses include: Wetlands in the South Carolina Conservation Bank; An atlas of women in American government; Effects of forest type and management history on downed woody material and leaf litter in a managed southeastern pine and hardwood forest; Analyzing the role of networks in the transfer of alternative culture: People and places facilitating the punk community in South Carolina; Spatial and market analysis of college football recruiting using Esri Business Analyst

Other recommendations
We encourage our students to present at professional conferences and workshops, and help to subsidize their travel to such events, when possible. Students have also been successful at garnering research funding from the Office of Undergraduate Research and been active in presenting at Discovery Day.

Why this is important
The Department of Geography at USC has been ranked as one of the Top 10 geography departments in the nation and includes faculty engaged in a wide variety of research. Pursuing professional research opportunities as an undergraduate student can help to enrich your academic experience while at the university. As an undergraduate student, you can work closely with faculty research mentors, explore a discipline that interests you and build a competitive edge in the job market.

How students can get started
Learn about your favorite faculty member’s area of research and ask about working on a project. Watch departmental e-mails for research opportunities.
**INTEGRATE**

**How to Integrate**

The integration and application of classroom knowledge is a central aspect of our undergraduate senior seminar (GEOG495: Seminar in Geography), in which students conduct and present independent research on a topic of local relevance. For example, in the fall 2012 semester, students worked on projects with three local agencies (the Gills Creek Watershed Association, Lexington County GIS, and Sustainable Midlands) to develop a virtual tour of the Gills Creek Watershed and additional maps showing the physical, cultural, and historical landmarks of the Columbia Riverwalk, part of the Three Rivers Greenway network of trails and parks. This work was featured in the ESRI Arcuser publication.

Students are given the opportunity to apply the knowledge and tools gained in their coursework through internships, research opportunities and other beyond-the-classroom experiences. A number of geography courses give students experience in conducting field work, challenging them to think about the first hand collection, analysis, interpretation and application of geographic data. Recent students have also had the opportunity to conduct field work in locations across the U.S. and the globe as part of Magellan Scholarships.

**LEAD**

**Initial career opportunities**

Many graduates pursue careers in areas such as environmental management, education, disaster response, city and county planning, and community development. Graduates may also choose careers as cartographers, remote sensing specialists, geographic information systems specialists, environmental consultants, park rangers, hazardous waste planners, transportation planners, area specialists, travel agents, market and location researchers, real estate agents, coastal zone managers, meteorologists, climatologists, and many more.

**Related graduate programs**

M.A. in Geography; M.S. in Geography; Masters in Earth and Environmental Resource Management (MEERM); Ph.D. in Geography. Students attending graduate school elsewhere have also gone into masters and Ph.D. programs in Natural Resources, Forestry, Geosciences, and Development Studies, among others.

**Future career opportunities**

Job growth in geography and related fields for which our students are trained such as cartography and surveying is predicted to be exceptionally strong in the next decade. Check out these projections and suggestions from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Other career comments**

For a more complete discussion of jobs in geography, ways to prepare for a career in geography, please see: Association of American Geographers

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The listed experiences are a sample of options for your major. See the USC Connect experiences database to search for more opportunities.

[www.sc.edu/usconnect/participate](http://www.sc.edu/usconnect/participate)