

# GEOGRAPHY

## Contact Information

**Division**  
STEM

**Dean**  
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## Overview

The Geography Department offers transfer courses to four-year colleges in diverse academic disciplines such as Geography, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Earth Science, Environmental Science, Meteorology, Climatology, Natural Resource Management, Tourism and Recreation, Urban Planning, International Studies, Anthropology and related social sciences. Emphasis in advancing geographic literacy, global awareness and sustainability in the fields of physical and human geography; field study classes provide experiential and interpretive training. Additional technical courses provide expertise in the exciting and fast-growing field of GIS and GeoSpatial technologies. A skills certificate is offered in GIS.

**Sean A. Booth**  
**Professor, Geography**  
B.S., University of Oregon  
M.A., California State University, Chico

## Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Advisory Committee

- Daniel Armstrong, GIS Specialist, Open Spatial, Rocklin
- Marc Ball, IT Specialist, City of Roseville
- Diana Carolan, GIS Specialist, Nevada County
- Michael Farrauto, Surveyor and GIS Specialist, Andregg Geomatics, Auburn
- Matt Freemont, Environmental Planner and GIS Specialist, HELIX, Folsom
- Dave Hansen, GIS Specialist, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Sacramento
- Kermit Hellem, GIS Manager, Sacramento Municipal Utility District
- Abe Hendricks, CAD and GIS Specialist, Placer County Water Agency, Auburn
- Scott Herbert, GIS Sales, California Surveying and Drafting Supply, Inc., Sacramento
- Colin Hobson, GIS Specialist, Open Spatial, Rocklin
- Hugh Howard, Geography and GIS Professor, American River College, Sacramento
- Brian Johnson, GIS Specialist, City of Roseville
- Dave Krolick, GIS Specialist, ECORP Consulting, Rocklin
- Justin Narkter, Public Works Specialist, City of Rocklin
- Steve Rhyne, GIS Specialist, Fehr and Peers, Roseville
- Sabastian Roberts, GIS Specialist, Nevada County

- Jeff Swager, GIS Specialist, ECORP Consulting, Rocklin
- Justin Wages, Land Manager, Placer Land Trust, Auburn

## Degrees/Certificates

### Associate Degree for Transfer

- Geography for Transfer (p. 1)

### Skills Certificate

- Geographic Information System (GIS) (p. 2)

## Geography for Transfer

### AA-T Degree

The Associate in Arts in Geography for Transfer degree (AA-T) program provides students with a strong foundation in Geography. Upon completion of the program, students will demonstrate knowledge of global physical and environmental processes; formulate an appreciation of world cultural diversity, including demographics, ethnic studies, agricultural practices, economic development and resource consumption; generate solutions for a sustainable future; holistically assess integrative environmental and cultural phenomena based on location and maps; assemble and analyze spatial information (such as maps, data, surveys, qualitative observations), using traditional and modern mapping technology methods; and integrate cultural, environmental and geographic technology methods.

The Associate in Arts in Geography for Transfer degree (AA-T) prepares students to transfer into the CSU system to complete a bachelor's degree in Geography or a major deemed similar by a CSU campus. Students earning an associate degree for transfer and meeting the CSU minimum transfer admission requirements are guaranteed admission with junior standing to the CSU system, but not to a particular campus or major. Upon transfer, students will be required to complete no more than 60 additional prescribed units to earn a bachelor's degree.

To earn the Associate in Arts in Geography for Transfer degree, students must complete 60 CSU-transferable semester units with a minimum grade point average of 2.0, including both of the following:

- completion of all courses required for the major with grades of "C" or better; and
- (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/associate-degree-requirements/>)California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/>)

The exact wording of the law pertaining to associate degrees for transfer may be found in Education Code Section 66746.

It is highly recommended that, prior to transferring, students complete courses that satisfy the CSU United States History, Constitution and American Ideals graduation requirement. In all cases, students should consult with a counselor for more information on university admission and transfer requirements.

**RESTRICTION:** International coursework from non-United States regionally accredited institutions cannot be applied to associate degrees for transfer.

### Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
GEOG 0001	Physical Geography	3
GEOG 0001L	Physical Geography Laboratory	1
GEOG 0002	Cultural Geography	3
<b>Select 6-8 units from the following:</b>		<b>6-8</b>
GEOG 0003	Geography of California	
GEOG 0004	Weather and Climate	
GEOG 0005	World Regional Geography	
GEOG 0016	Field Geography - Central California Coast	
GEOG 0090	Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	
<b>Select 6-7 units from the following or unused courses from the preceding area:</b>		<b>6-7</b>
ANTH 0002	Cultural Anthropology	
ESCI 0001	Physical Geology	
MATH 0013		
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>19-22</b>

## Geographic Information System (GIS)

### Skills Certificate

Designed for students to gain a solid foundation in GIS theory and related technologies, such as GPS and remote sensing. Sequence of courses build upon each other to provide hands-on technical skills demanded of the professional workforce, culminating with a professional map portfolio and repertoire of spatial analysis skills. Opportunities for interns and entry-level positions are abundant, provided students learn industry-standard software, GPS skills, database management and mapping design. Students must choose from additional courses, such as computer-aided design (CAD), database management, computer programming, surveying, spatial analysis and are encouraged to participate in an internship. A skills certificate is designed to provide career technical skills; it is not equivalent to an associate degree.

### Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
GEOG 0086	Global Positioning System (GPS) for GIS	1
GEOG 0090	Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	4
GEOG 0093	Advanced GIS	4
<b>Select 6 units from the following:</b>		<b>6</b>
ADVM 0001	Computer Aided Design for Mechanical Design and Drafting I	
CSCI 0012	Programming Concepts and Methodology I	
CSCI 0052	Introduction to SQL	
ENGR 0151	Engineering Graphics	
GEOG 0085	Application of Geospatial Technologies	
GEOG 0091A	Beginning Geospatial Design	
GEOG 0091B	Intermediate Geospatial Design	
GEOG 0094	Geospatial Analysis	
GEOG 0095	Internship in Geography (up to 3 units)	
IT 0055	Database Management	

IT 0075	Python for Many Uses	
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>15</b>

## Courses

Understanding course descriptions (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/course-information/understanding-course-descriptions/>)

### GEOG 0001. Physical Geography

*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

Explore Earth's landscape and environmental processes, including the Earth's atmosphere, weather, climate regions, hydrosphere, oceans, clouds, rivers, biosphere, and the Earth landforms, such as mountain building and river systems. Emphasis on the holistic understanding landscape patterns and environmental systems as they relate to location. Also examines human influence on the natural world. (C-ID GEOG 110) (combined with GEOG 1L, C-ID GEOG 115) (CSU, UC)

### GEOG 0001L. Physical Geography Laboratory

*Unit: 1*

Prerequisite: Completion with grade of "C" or better or concurrent enrollment in GEOG 1

Hours: 54 laboratory

Earth's physical systems, atmosphere, weather and climate, landforms and fluvial systems; includes map reading and investigating remote sensing, GPS, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). (C-ID GEOG 111) (combined with GEOG 1, C-ID GEOG 115) (CSU, UC)

### GEOG 0002. Cultural Geography

*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

Population, migration, religion, languages, agriculture, economic development and exploration of how humans interact with their environment. Analysis of differences of cultures including housing types, agricultural techniques, and popular and folk customs. Investigation of humans as the primary modifier of the physical landscape within the limits of the Earth's natural resources. (C-ID GEOG 120) (CSU, UC)

### GEOG 0003. Geography of California

*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

An introduction to California's diversified geography including climate, landforms, natural vegetation, and water resources, the cultural landscapes of ethnic diversity, our Native American past, urban and agricultural regions, and the economic challenges of the future. Emphasis on cultural diversity, human alteration of the landscape, contemporary problems and resource competition. (C-ID GEOG 140) (CSU, UC)

### GEOG 0004. Weather and Climate

*Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

The elements and controls of weather and climate - atmospheric heating, the heat budget, air circulation and winds, moisture, clouds, and precipitation; world climates, their classifications; data collection and interpretation, investigate global climates to microclimates. (C-ID GEOG 130) (CSU, UC)

**GEOG 0005. World Regional Geography***Units: 3*

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL C1000

Hours: 54 lecture

An introduction to the world's major geographic regions; their cultural practices, politics, economics, religions, history and environmental characteristics. Location and analysis of important geographic features including mountains, rivers, countries and major cities of Asia, Australia, Africa, North America, Europe and South America. (C-ID GEOG 125) (CSU, UC)

**GEOG 0015. Field Geography - Northern California***Units: 0.5*

Hours: 13 (7 lecture, 6 laboratory)

Explore valley and mountainous regions of Northern California, such as the Sacramento Valley, northern Coast Range and the southern Cascade mountains; learn about the region's natural history, its culture and past history, its people and industry, human-environmental relationships including land-use, and a sense of place. Some hiking and camping may be required. (CSU)

**GEOG 0016. Field Geography - Central California Coast***Units: 1-2*

Hours: 30 (12 lecture, 18 laboratory) per unit

Explore the central coast of Northern California, including the San Francisco Bay Area, the Monterey Bay and Santa Cruz area surrounded by a redwood and coastal ecosystem; learn about the region's natural history, its culture and past history, its people and industry, human-environmental relationships including land-use, and a sense of place. Some hiking and camping may be required. (C-ID GEOG 160) (CSU)

**GEOG 0017. Field Geography - Greater Sierra Nevada & Lake Tahoe***Units: 1-2*

Hours: 30 (12 lecture, 18 laboratory) per unit

Explore the greater Sierra Nevada region, such as Lake Tahoe and the surrounding Sierra Nevada mountains; learn about the region's natural history, its culture and past history, its people and industry, human-environmental relationships including land-use, and a sense of place. Some hiking and camping may be required. (CSU)

**GEOG 0028. Independent Study***Units: 1-3*

Designed for students interested in furthering their knowledge at an independent study level in an area where no specific curriculum offering is currently available. Independent study might include, but is not limited to, research papers, special subject area projects, and research projects. See Independent Study page in catalog. (CSU, UC-with unit limitation)

**GEOG 0085. Application of Geospatial Technologies***Unit: 1*

Hours: 18 lecture

Investigation of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) case studies used in industry and government; explores how industry uses GIS with emphasis on natural resource management and watershed analysis. Additional focus on remote sensing, aerial photography, GPS technology. (CSU)

**GEOG 0086. Global Positioning System (GPS) for GIS***Unit: 1*

Hours: 18 lecture

Global Positioning System (GPS) theory and techniques, GPS field collection, GIS integration and publishing web maps. Discussion of state-of-the-art hardware and industry-standard software used by GIS professionals to prepare, collect and process spatial data. Data collected during class culminates in a comprehensive GIS mapping project used for analysis. (CSU)

**GEOG 0090. Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS)***Units: 4*

Hours: 72 lecture

Study of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and its applications to spatial data management. Focus on project design, data acquisition, database management, geographic analysis, and map design. Explores how GIS solves spatial problems, such as those in natural resources, earth and life sciences, environmental planning, local government, business, transportation, and other related fields. (C-ID GEOG 155) (CSU, UC)

**GEOG 0091A. Beginning Geospatial Design***Unit: 1*

Hours: 18 lecture

Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) cartographic and database design. Emphasis on GIS and mapping design for practical applications in the fields of natural resource management, disaster mapping, urban planning, business and other related fields. GIS skills include organizing geographic features and attributes, classifying data, labeling, symbology, and proper layout to create maps for GIS analysis. (CSU)

**GEOG 0091B. Intermediate Geospatial Design***Unit: 1*

Prerequisite: Completion with a grade of "C" or better or concurrent enrollment in GEOG 90 or 91A

Hours: 18 lecture

Builds on basic principles of beginning GIS Design, creating and editing maps, organizing GIS data for spatial analysis, and producing map layouts. (CSU)

**GEOG 0093. Advanced GIS***Units: 4*

Prerequisite: Completion of GEOG 90 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 72 lecture

Explores advanced topics that build upon previously learned GIS concept and skills. Improve problem solving skills, spatial database organization, modeling, and producing various map outputs. Student completes a research project and assembles a map portfolio. (CSU)

**GEOG 0094. Geospatial Analysis***Units: 3*

Prerequisite: Completion with grade of "C" or better or concurrent enrollment in GEOG 90 or 91B

Hours: 54 lecture

Geospatial analysis reveals patterns, relationships, and trends that solve real-world challenges. With GIS tools, students create surface contours, derive slopes, calculate flow direction, draw watersheds, determine line of sight and identify hotspots. GIS modeling and extensions are used. (CSU)

**GEOG 0095. Internship in Geography**

*Units: 0.5-4*

Designed for advanced students to work in an area related to their educational or occupational goal. Provides new on-the-job technical training under the direction of a worksite supervisor, allowing students to expand knowledge and skills in the chosen field. Mandatory orientation session and faculty approval to determine eligibility. One unit of credit is equal to 54 hours of work. Students may earn up to a total of 16 units in internship courses (any course numbered 95 and PDEV 94). (CSU-with unit limitation)

**Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)**

- Demonstrate knowledge of global physical and environmental processes, locations and develop an appreciation of landscapes.
- Formulate an appreciation of world cultural diversity, including demographics, ethnic studies, agricultural practices, economic development, resource consumption and generate solutions for a sustainable future.
- Utilizing the concept of a region as a geographic unit of study, holistically assess integrative environmental and cultural phenomenon based on location and maps.
- Assemble and analyze spatial information (maps, data, surveys, qualitative observations, etc.), using traditional and modern mapping technology methods.
- Applying experiential learning and real-world applications, field studies integrate cultural, environmental and geographic technology methods.