

ASSESSMENT PLAN
MASTER OF ARTS IN GEOGRAPHY
Spring 2021

University Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

ILO 1: Well-prepared with communication, numeracy and critical thinking skills to successfully join the workforce of California and the world or to pursue advanced study; *(PLO 1, 3, 4, 5)*

ILO 2: Critically and ethically engaged in global and local issues; *(PLO 1, 4, 5)*

ILO 3: Knowledgeable and respectful of the diversity of individuals, groups, and cultures; *(PLO 4)*

ILO 4: Accomplished at integrating the skills of a liberal education with disciplinary or professional competency; *(PLO 5)*

ILO 5: Skilled in collaborative problem-solving, research, and creative activity. *(PLO 1, 2, 3)*

Geography MA Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

PLO 1: Compare and contrast the theories, philosophies, and concepts in the discipline of geography, including unifying themes of spatial patterns and structures, the interrelationship between people and places, and the interactions between nature and society. *(ILO 1, 2, 5)*

PLO 2: Demonstrate an advanced understanding of and ability to differentiate among the various methodologies used in geographic research. *(ILO 5)*

PLO 3: Acquire, analyze, evaluate, interpret and critique geographic data and/or research. *(ILO 1, 5)*

PLO 4: Communicate mastery of geographic data, theories, philosophies, and concepts in oral, written, and visual forms, with ethical engagement and respect for diversity of individuals, groups, and cultures. *(ILO 1, 2, 3)*

PLO 5: Identify and assess how geographic concepts apply in the workplace and in everyday life to solve real-world problems. *(ILO 1, 2, 4)*

General Assessment Plan

PLO 1: Compare and contrast the theories, philosophies, and concepts in the discipline of geography, including unifying themes of spatial patterns and structures, the interrelationship between people and places, and the interactions between nature and society.

- a. Curriculum map:
 - Completion of GEOG 596
 - Completion of two topical (600 series) seminars
- b. Measures of individual student achievement of outcome:
 - Grades of B or better in GEOG 596 and two seminars (GEOG 600, 640, 650, 666, and/or 680)
 - Satisfactory completion of a thesis
- c. Assessment of programmatic achievement of outcomes:
 - Evaluation of a sampling of seminar discussion papers
 - Evaluation of the literature review/theoretical framework of a thesis
- d. Findings and use of findings:
 - Findings will be used to identify needed revisions in curriculum

PLO 2: Demonstrate an advanced understanding of and ability to distinguish differences between the various methodologies used in geography

- a. Curriculum map:
 - Completion of GEOG 696
- b. Measures of individual student achievement of outcome:
 - Grade of B or better in GEOG 696
 - Successful completion of thesis proposal and Advancement to Candidacy
 - Satisfactory completion of the methodology section of a thesis
- c. Assessment of programmatic achievement of outcomes:
 - Evaluation of a sampling of thesis proposals and/or methods sections of theses.
 - All faculty and graduate students are invited to attend the thesis proposal presentations, at which graduate students completing 696 participate. A discussion of methodological strengths and weaknesses follows each presentation and enables all faculty to assess the typical level of graduate student achievement of PLO 2.
 - Survey 696 students to determine whether additional topical material should be included in 696 for successful proposal preparation.
 - Planned: Focus groups and entry and exit surveys of graduate students to allow them to assess the program's ability to help them master PLO 2.
- d. Findings and use of findings:
 - Findings will be used to identify needed revisions in curriculum
 - GEOG 696 was implemented as a separate course in 2003-04 to emphasize research design and proposal preparation, to encourage student preparation for their thesis research. Prior assessment (2018) indicates that this curricular change increased retention and graduation rates. Further assessment is needed to determine whether this trend is continuing.

PLO 3: Acquire, analyze, evaluate, interpret and critique geographic data and/or research.

- a. Curriculum map:
 - Completion of an advanced Methods course
 - Completion of one or more elective courses
- b. Measures of individual student achievement of outcome:
 - Grade of B or better in Methods course and electives
 - Successful completion of thesis
- c. Assessment of programmatic achievement of outcomes:
 - Evaluation of a sampling of final projects in methods courses and 500-level electives
 - Theses evaluation. All theses completed in a given year (ranging from 5-10) are considered in spring faculty meetings for possible nomination for CLA Best Thesis Award. Those nominated are read by all faculty, and the merits of each discussed prior to voting. This process allows participation of all faculty in the assessment of a given year's thesis production and the achievement by advanced graduate students of PLO 3.
- d. Findings and use of findings:
 - Findings will be used to identify needed revisions in curriculum
 - An earlier round of informal assessment of graduate admissions and thesis completions led to a redesign of the curriculum in 2002 (effective for new graduate students in 2003-04) to provide more explicit guidance on thesis proposal development, thesis chair and committee adoption, and public feedback for graduate

thesis proposals. Subsequent assessment (2018) indicates that this curricular change increased retention and graduation rates. Further assessment is needed to determine whether this trend is continuing.

PLO 4: Communicate mastery of geographic data, theories, philosophies, and concepts in oral, written, and visual forms, with ethical engagement and respect for diversity of individuals, groups, and cultures.

- a. Curriculum map:
 - Completion of graduate level research papers, projects, maps, and presentations in all courses used in the graduate program of study
- b. Measures of individual student achievement of outcome:
 - Grades of B or better in all courses used in the graduate program of study
 - Successful completion of thesis
 - Optional but strongly encouraged: Presentation of research at professional conferences in geography and related fields and campus events (e.g., AAG, APCG, University Student Research Symposia)
- c. Assessment of programmatic achievement of outcomes:
 - Evaluation of a sampling of research papers, projects, maps, and presentations in Methods and elective courses
 - Evaluation of completed theses by committee members
 - Collection of data on numbers of graduate students presenting work at conferences and campus events, levels of such events (local, regional, national, international)
 - Attendance by faculty at conferences allows participating faculty to assess graduate students' achievement of PLO 4 in the high-pressure exposure of a professional conference. Nearly all faculty attend at least one conference in the course of a year, and may seek out student presentations to witness, support, and assess.
- d. Findings and use of findings:
 - Findings will be used to identify needed revisions in curriculum
 - Continue to support and encourage graduate students to publicly present research for professional development and engagement in their profession.

PLO 5: Identify and assess how geographic concepts apply in the workplace and in everyday life to solve real-world problems

- a. Curriculum map:
 - Completion of the graduate program of study
- b. Measures of individual student achievement of outcome:
 - Grades of B or better in all courses used in the graduate program of study
 - Successful completion of thesis
 - Optional but strongly encouraged: internship experience
- c. Assessment of programmatic achievement of outcomes:
 - Evaluation of a sampling of research papers/projects in program coursework
 - Evaluation of theses in terms of how research findings are situated
 - Exit surveys of graduate students to allow them to assess the program's ability to help them master PLO 5.
 - Systematic annual review of alumni success (updating of the alumni database compiled for Self-Study)
- d. Findings and use of findings:
 - Findings will be used to identify needed revisions in curriculum



California State University, Long Beach
 College of Liberal Arts
Curriculum Mapping
GEOGRAPHY MA

Course #	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5	Course Title
500	D	D	M	M	D	Multivariate Geographic Analysis
502	D	D	M	M	D	Qualitative Geographic Analysis
540	D		M	D	D	Land and Water Resources
541		D	D	M		The Geography of Mars
543	D	D	M	M	D	Watersheds: Process & Management
548	D	M	M	D	D	Environmental Assessment
558	M	D	M	D	M	Hazards & Risk Management
562	M	M	M	M	D	Gender, Place and Culture
564	M	D	D	M	M	Urban Geog: Sustainable Cities
565	M	M	M	M	M	Social Geography
567	M	M	M	M	M	Urban Geog: Metropolitan Prob & Solutions
569	M	M	M	M	M	Cities and Social Justice
575	D	M	M	D	M	Geographic Appl Remote Sensing
582	D	D	M	D		Advanced Digital Cartography & GIS

I = Introduced

D = Developed & Practiced with Feedback

M = Demonstrated at the Mastery Level Appropriate for Graduation

Spring 2020



California State University, Long Beach
 College of Liberal Arts
Curriculum Mapping
GEOGRAPHY MA

Course #	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5	Course Title
584	D	D	M			Enterprise GIS
585	D	D	D	D	D	Principles of Geographic Info Science
586	M	D	M	M	M	Field Meth Landscape Analysis
587A	I	M	M	M	I	Appl GIS: Enviro & Nat Resource
587B	M	M	M	M	M	Appl GIS: Urban & Economic
588	D	M	M	M	M	GIS Programming
596	M	M	M	M	M	Geographic Thought Literature
600	M	M	M	M	M	Seminar in Geography
640	M	M	M	M	M	Sem in Phys/Environmental Geography
650	M	M	M	M	M	Seminar in Cultural Geography
666	M	M	M	M	M	Seminar in Urban Geography
680	M	M	M	M	M	Sem in Geospatial Science
696		M		M	M	Sem in Geographic Research Design

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Spring 2020

California State University, Long Beach
Comprehensive Assessment Plan (7-year cycle for traditional programs or accreditation cycle)
DEPARTMENT: Geography, Master of Arts

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
<i>ILOs</i> <i>See key</i>	<i>PLOs</i> <i>See key</i>	<i>SLOs</i>	<i>Course where each SLO is assessed</i>	<i>Assessment activity/ assignment used to measure each SLO</i>	<i>Assessment tool used to measure outcome success</i>	<i>Assessment schedule – how often SLOs will be assessed</i>	<i>How data/ findings will be quantitatively or qualitatively reported</i>	<i>Designated personnel to collect, analyze, and interpret student learning outcome data</i>	<i>Program data/ findings dissemination schedule</i>	<i>Closing the loop strategies</i>
1, 2, 5	1	Evaluate geographic theories, philosophies, and concepts in oral, written, and visual forms.	Geog 596	Critical review papers	Rubric to assess critical thinking and written expression	Minimally, once every seven years, beginning in 2021-22	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course(s) assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
1, 2, 5	1	Analyze complex socio-environmental problems and compare and contrast alternative viewpoints and their implications.	600-level seminar	Critical review papers, research papers	Rubric to assess critical thinking and written expression	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course(s) and assignments assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
5	2	To expand thesis concept into a set of research questions, situate those in the context of relevant literature, develop appropriate methodology to answer those questions	Geog 696	Thesis proposals	Rubric to assess research methods	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with thesis committees for proposals assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
1, 5	3	Define a research question and method for gathering and analyzing data to address the question	Geog 586	Final project report & presentation	Rubric to assess critical thinking and written expression	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course and assignments assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum

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DEPARTMENT: Geography, Master of Arts

1, 2, 3	4	N/A	Geog 698	Completed Thesis, presentation at conferences, research events	Rubric to assess quality of scholarly contribution	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, # of students considered for best thesis, # conference presentations	Graduate committee coordinates with thesis advisors and committee members	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
		Demonstrate ability to conduct in-depth research and present results in written and oral formats	Geog 582 or 587A, or 587B or 588	Evaluation of projects/ maps, final presentation in Methods courses	Rubric to assess written and oral communication skills	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course(s) and assignments assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
1, 2, 4	5	Identify and analyze urban sustainability issues facing the LA region	Geog 564	Group service-learning project	Rubric to assess critical and applied thinking	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course(s) and assignments assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
		Critically evaluate the role of institutions, ideas, and people in generating, sustaining, and altering difference, inequality and justice.	Geog 565	Community organization project	Rubric to assess critical and applied thinking	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course(s) and assignments assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum
		Reflect on what it means to be a participant in solving urban problems	Geog 567	Research paper	Rubric to assess critical and applied thinking	Minimally, once every seven years	Assessment report, % of students with ratings of 3-4 on 0-4 scale.	Graduate committee coordinates with faculty of course(s) and assignments assessed.	Annually at faculty meeting	Identify where and/or what form of revision is needed in graduate program/ curriculum

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Key:

A. Institutional Learning Outcomes: <http://www.csulb.edu/academic-affairs/program-review-and-assessment/student-success-institutional-learning-outcomes>

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B. Program Learning Outcomes: Your department / program outcomes

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C & D. Student Learning Outcomes: A representative outcome from the syllabus or SCO of a course that will be assessed (usually begin with one where students demonstrate degree-level mastery of the outcome)

E. Examples of assessment activities: final exam, presentation, project, performance, observations, classroom response systems, computer simulated tasks, analytical paper, case study, portfolio, critique, policy paper, comparative analysis project, qualifying or comprehensive examination, project, thesis, dissertation, and many others.

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F. Examples of Assessment Tools (an instrument used to score or evaluate an assessment activity/assignment): Rubrics (that produce scores based on established criteria – can be used with most activities listed above), observational checklists, etc.

G. Assessment Schedule: This schedule should be realistic. In general, a program should try to assess one program outcome at least twice during its program review cycle.

H. Examples of ways to report assessment data: number/percentage of those scoring at or above 4.0 on a 5.0 point scale on the assessment used to measure mastery of a specific SLO; number/percentage of students scoring at the highly proficient level; instructor observational narrative that includes analysis and findings to qualitatively show trends and patterns; mean scores of all who exhibited desired traits or behaviors on an observational checklist. Other examples?

I. Designated Personnel: Who in your program is responsible for organizing and conducting the assessment? Responses may include: assessment committee, assessment coordinator, all faculty, or chair.

J & K When will findings be reported and what closing-the-loop strategies are being used: When will you report these findings to the rest of your program's faculty and discuss the closing-the-loop strategies? Strategies may include revising program curriculum, reviewing curriculum map to determine course order, more training on inter-rater reliability, etc.