Geographic Information Systems

Geographic information systems (GIS) display and manage all types of data over time, usually in the form of maps, charts and reports that help with the analysis of patterns and trends.

GIS technology, which is easily integrated into any organization’s information system, provides a quick and effective method for sharing data visually and for solving spatial problems. GIS is widely used in many fields and industries, including environmental science, architecture, engineering, medicine, municipal government, public health, social work, business and a variety of research enterprises.

The 18-unit Certificate in Geographic Information Systems offered through University College teaches both fundamental and advanced concepts and skills, including the design of GIS projects, the operation of GIS software, cartographic output, spatial analysis, and industry-specific applications of GIS. The certificate targets working professionals seeking course work and skill enhancement in the field as well as students wishing to complement their academic interests with additional training in GIS.

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Requirements

Certificate in Geographic Information Systems

Required Courses: 15 units

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIS 200</td>
<td>Introduction to GIS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS 300</td>
<td>Advanced GIS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS 303</td>
<td>Digital Cartography</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>GIS 421</td>
<td>Spatial Data Modeling and Design</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>GIS 422</td>
<td>GIS Clinic</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
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<td>15</td>
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Elective Courses: 3 units

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIS 310</td>
<td>GIS Programming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS 425</td>
<td>Public Health Applications of GIS</td>
<td>3</td>
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GI 427 Public Sector Applications of GIS 3
Other courses with approval

Courses


U90 GIS 200 Introduction to GIS
This course introduces students to the fundamental principles and applications of geographic information systems (GIS) as well as their underlying geospatial science and spatial thinking. This problem-based course explores applications of GIS to spatial questions in the areas of social science, business, the humanities, and earth sciences. Example topics include understanding spatial data types; map coordinate systems and projections; basic spatial data analysis; acquiring, editing, creating, and managing geospatial data; and processing and visualizing data using GIS. This hands-on course works through problems using (mainly) ESRI ArcGIS software (including ArcMap and ArcCatalog), but other open-source tools will also be introduced. Students who complete this course should be able to apply the skills to think through a spatial problem and employ GIS tools to address it.
Credit 3 units.

U90 GIS 300 Advanced GIS
This course is designed to move beyond tools and skills learned in Introduction to GIS (GIS 200) or Applications in GIS (EnSt 380/580). Classes will feature hands-on exercises selected to help students master advanced GIS analysis tools and techniques, while providing experience in the planning and execution of real-world projects. Primary emphasis will be on applying fundamental GIS concepts, performing spatial analysis, developing proficiency with core ArcGIS software and selected extensions, resolution of problems, and efficient delivery of results. Readings from books and scientific literature will introduce key concepts and provide real-world examples that will be reinforced in the hands-on exercises, assignments and projects. As the semester develops, students will gain a variety of new tools and techniques that will allow them to complete a final independent project that integrates the material learned during the course. Prerequisite: Introduction to GIS (U90 GIS 200) or Applications of GIS (EnSt 380/580).
Credit 3 units. Arch: NSM Art: NSM

U90 GIS 303 Digital Cartography
In today’s world, it is imperative that students develop the necessary skills to communicate their ideas to a large audience in an efficient manner. Graphics and visual representations are one of the most effective ways to neatly convey complex data sets to readers. This course presents both theoretical and hands-on mapping and graphical problems to students. Students will learn to solve these problems with self-created solutions. The course teaches students the basics of GIS based mapping for producing publishable work. Students will develop basic skills in computer-aided mapping and computer drafting primarily using ArcGIS, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, and Microsoft PowerPoint. Students will also be introduced to other mapping or statistical programs as needed.
Credit 3 units.
U90 GIS 310 GIS Programming
This course introduces students to the use of programming in desktop and web geographic information systems (GIS). The course will be divided into two units: the first unit will focus on scripting for task automation, while the focus of the second unit will be web development. Topics include general programming concepts, using spatial and scientific site-packages for both Python and R, the ArcGIS API for JavaScript and other web mapping APIs, and consuming and publishing map services. Prerequisite: Introduction to GIS (U90 GIS 200) or Applications of GIS (EnSt 380/580). Credit 3 units.

U90 GIS 420 Using GIS in International Affairs
This course studies the concept of spatial thinking, which will help students determine why and when to use GIS to address a problem. Students will explore some tools available for visualizing and analyzing data, primarily using primarily using ArcGIS and QGIS. The class will be divided into sections based on different kinds of problems (e.g., demography, microeconomics, history, environment) with an international affairs focus. Each class will have an online prompt, to which students are expected to respond. Students will learn skills that may help address the problem, work together in pairs on the problem, and with the class explore ways to improve their solution. Same as U85 IA 420 Credit 3 units.

U90 GIS 421 Spatial Data Modeling and Design
This course expands on the fundamental principles of geographic information systems (GIS) and introduces advanced spatial database concepts and a visual programming environment for automating geoprocessing tasks. The course is divided into two parts: the first exploring spatial database design with emphasis on the ESRI Geodatabase, and the second focusing on automating workflows using ESRI ModelBuilder. Topics include data needs assessment; conceptual modeling, logical design, and physical implementation; using models to perform multi-step spatial analyses; and the automation of repetitive processes with iteration tools. Lectures are supplemented with lab exercises to develop proficiency and problem-solving skills using ArcGIS software and associated tools. Prerequisite: the course should be taken after or concurrently with Advanced GIS (U90 GIS 300). Credit 3 units.

U90 GIS 422 GIS Clinic
The GIS Clinic is the culminating experience in the GIS Certificate Program. Students complete a project in a real work setting to provide direct experience with geospatial concepts and data. Students apply concepts and tools covered in all courses comprising the GIS Certificate program. GIS Clinic requires students to work on projects beginning to end, both under supervision and independently. The Clinic provides professional services to the university community as well as to outside organizations. Possible clinic settings include working with faculty on research projects using GIS, working with local organizations to develop GIS data, and working on regional GIS initiatives. Prerequisite: All other GIS Certificate requirements are expected to be completed prior to enrolling in the Clinic. Credit 3 units.

U90 GIS 425 Public Health Applications of GIS
This course examines the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and spatial analysis concepts in health applications. The course requires an understanding of fundamental GIS principles, and will address practical real-world applications of GIS with a focus on public health. Topics addressed may include establishing a GIS approach within an agency or organization, targeted analysis tasks, spatial aspects of epidemiology, health education, environmental hazards and more. Class meetings are a mix of lecture, discussion and hands-on exercises. Lab exercises will leverage GIS software including ArcGIS. Prerequisite: Introduction to GIS (U90 GIS 200) or Applications of GIS (EnSt 380/580). Credit 3 units.

U90 GIS 427 Public Sector Applications of GIS
This course examines the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and geographic information science in the public sector, with a focus on GIS applications in local government and municipality services. The course requires an understanding of fundamental GIS principles, and will address practical application of fundamental and advanced GIS concepts and practices. Topics addressed include GIS implementation at the organization and department levels, problem solving with GIS, and geospatial project management. Lectures are integrated with lab sessions using GIS software including ArcGIS, Google Earth, and Open Street Map. Prerequisite: Introduction to GIS (U90 GIS 200) or Applications of GIS (EnSt 380/580). Credit 3 units. UColl: OLH