

Department of Geography

Miami University

Oxford, Ohio

Graduate Program Information Bulletin

2007-2008

Contents

History of Department

Master's Degree Program

Policies & Procedures

1. Application and Admission

2. The Core Curriculum

3. Elective Courses

4. Committee Formation

5. Thesis/Internship

6. Examinations

7. Other Program Requirements

Typical Timeline for Graduate Study

Graduate Assistant Responsibilities

Graduate Students in Residence

Graduate Faculty

This bulletin describes the requirements and procedures governing your graduate study in Geography at Miami. Please read them carefully, and consult them frequently throughout your work. If you have questions please don't hesitate to ask either Thomas Klak, Graduate Studies Advisor at klakt@muohio.edu or Bill Renwick, Department Chair at renwicwh@muohio.edu.

History of Department

The Department of Geography at Miami University was established in 1906, the first in a state-supported institution in Ohio. The graduate program, initiated in 1929, is the second oldest in the state. Our graduates as well as Miami students generally have benefited immensely from the Geography program as evidenced by their subsequent success in business, government, and the academic community. The graduate program in Geography has awarded over 200 master's degrees and one doctorate. The Department has excellent facilities and equipment, including a well-equipped geographic information systems laboratory.

Graduate students can expect personalized attention at Miami. Faculty are accessible and a low student-faculty ratio facilitates discussion and faculty assistance on graduate research. In addition, the Department has a Geography and Urban & Regional Planning Society consisting of undergraduate majors and minors, graduate students, and faculty.

Master's Degree Program

The Department of Geography offers the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree. The Department offers rigorous and flexible programs providing students with a level of instruction and guidance that allow them to become professional geographers. Graduates of the M.A. program are prepared for entry-level technical and managerial positions in city, state, and federal governmental agencies, and in a variety of business and industrial firms. At the same time the M.A. program is designed to prepare students to qualify for admission to a Ph.D. program in geography or a related discipline.

All M.A. students must complete a minimum of 36 graduate level semester credit hours, satisfy the specific criteria of their individual programs, and comply with all general requirements of the Graduate School as stipulated in *The Miami Bulletin, Graduate Edition 2005- 2007* (http://www.miami.muohio.edu/documents_and_policies/graduatebulletin07/). The M.A. in Geography consists of a common series of core courses (13 credits), additional coursework appropriate to their interests to total 24-30 credits, and a thesis or internship of 6-12 credits. In addition, students must pass a written qualifying exam and an oral final exam.

Policies and procedures

1. Application and Admission

Application for admission to the graduate program in geography is made through the graduate school, which forwards the application to the Geography Department. If the applicant is acceptable to both the Department and the Graduate School, admission is granted. Applications for graduate assistantships are evaluated by the Geography Department, and awards are made on the basis of academic qualifications. Awards are made for one year, with the understanding that if assistantships are available and if the student maintains good academic standing the award will be renewed for a second year. Assistantships are not renewed beyond the second year.

Prerequisites to enter program

Prerequisites for graduate work are introductory human geography, introductory physical geography, cartography/GIS, and two additional advanced geography courses. These prerequisites may be waived by the Graduate Studies committee if the necessary subject matter has been addressed within the broader context of other course work completed for the baccalaureate degree. If quantitative methods and cartography/GIS were not taken as part of a student's undergraduate program, graduate courses in these topics may be required during a student's first two semesters in residence.

Before classes start

Incoming students meet with the faculty in the week prior to the start of classes in the Fall Semester. At that time students: (1) receive an orientation to the Department and to its program requirements, (2) are assigned assistantship duties (if the student has a Teaching Assistantship award) and participate in a training session for Teaching Assistants (GEO 605; required of all MA students), (3) have an opportunity for advisement on course selection and registration, and (4) participate in a half-day program conducted by the Graduate School.

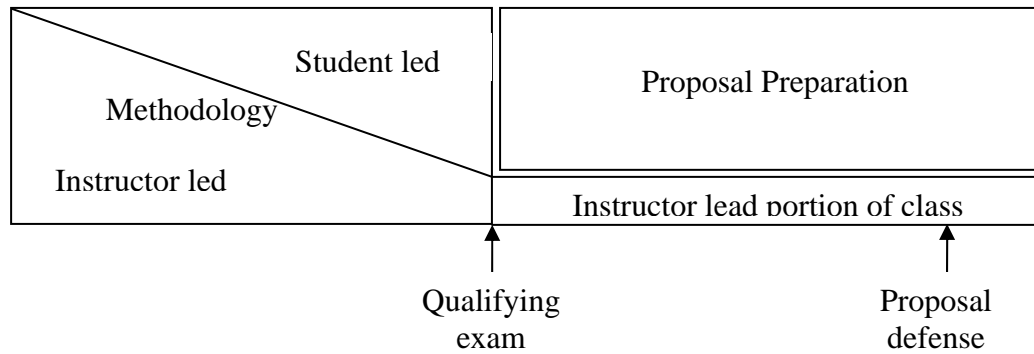
2. The Core Curriculum

The core curriculum is required of all M.A. candidates. It is intended to introduce students to departmental resources, provide a grounding in important theoretical, conceptual, and methodological concepts in geography, help build a sense of community among students, and provide opportunities for students to define and develop their individual interests. The core curriculum includes the following courses:

- a. GEO 605 - Teaching Skills in Geography (1 credit) offered during the week prior to the first semester
This course focuses on strategies for teaching contemporary geography concepts in discussion and laboratory components of introductory geography courses. The course is required of all incoming graduate students, and is graded pass/fail.
- b. GEO 602 - Geographic Thought (4 credits) offered First Semester
The purposes of Geography 602 include: (1) to understand the development and evolution of the discipline and to address current philosophic and methodological issues in the field and (2) provide a structured opportunity for oral and written discourse at a level required of professionals in the discipline. This course is evaluated by letter grade by the instructor.
- c. GEO 601 - Geographic Research (3 credits) offered Second Semester
This course provides an introduction to data collection and analysis techniques common to geographic problem solving. Topics covered include bibliographic techniques, electronic data acquisition and management, and use of basic data processing software. Students will also complete their qualifying exam in GEO 601. The qualifying exam is a written exam, about four hours in length (more on this later in document). This course is evaluated by letter grade by the instructor in consultation with the advisory committee.
- d. GEO 610 – Independent Study for Proposal Preparation (3 credits) Second Semester
This course is designed as thesis/internship proposal writing in which each student develops their proposal with her/his advisor. Each student signs up for an independent study with their advisor and gives one presentation to the faculty on their progress about

two or three weeks before the end of the semester. The independent study is evaluated pass/fail by the advisor.

The following diagram indicates the structure of GEO 601 & 610: roughly the first half of the semester focuses on methods, with students playing increasingly central roles as the semester unfolds. The second half of the semester focuses on proposal preparation and presentations.



The end product of GEO 601 and 610 is a thesis or internship proposal that each student defends to her/his committee near the end of the semester. The proposal should include the following information: a) an introduction to the problems and issues raised in the thesis; b) a review of the literature in the topical area and a demonstration of how the proposed study relates to previous work; c) hypotheses and/or specific research questions to be addressed in the thesis; d) the methodology to be employed in the study and a timetable for completing the various tasks; and e) a preliminary outline of chapters in the thesis.

- e. GEO 620 – Visiting Speaker Series (1 credit – offered each semester)
MA students are required to register for this course at least twice during their four semesters in the MA program. This course focuses on preparing for each guest speaker by reading publications and attending presentations by guest speakers. The end product of this course is an up to 10 page paper on the seminar series.
- f. Techniques & Methods requirement: One course from the following:
GEO 537 Regional Land Use Capability Analysis
GEO 541 Geographic Information Systems
GEO 542 Advanced Geographic Information Systems
GEO 547 Aerial Photo Interpretation
GEO 548 Techniques and Applications of Remote Sensing
Any GEO 560 course in cartography, GIS, air photo interpretation, or remote sensing
STA 573 Applied Multiple Regression
STA 576 Experimental Design
STA 671 Environmental Statistics
Language instruction or other methods courses appropriate to the student's research interests are subject to approval by the graduate advisor.

3. Elective courses

In addition to the core requirement, the student should take a combination of other courses appropriate to their special interests, in consultation with the advisor, to bring the total credit hours to a minimum of 24.

If a student holds a full graduate assistantship, s/he is required to take a minimum of 10 credits per semester. Those with modified assistantships must take a minimum of 12 credits per semester.

Course options include:

- Any other 500 or higher level Geography course, you can see a list of courses offered at: <http://www.admin.muohio.edu/cfapps/courselist/>
- Any 500 or higher level course offered by another department, find these courses at the same web address: <http://www.admin.muohio.edu/cfapps/courselist/>
- An independent study with a particular faculty member. This needs to be worked out with the individual professor. Students should contact them by email or wait to see them in August.

4. Committee formation

Students must choose a graduate advisory committee by the end of their first semester. The committee must have at least three members; a chair and at least two readers. The Chair must have Level A graduate faculty standing in the Geography department, and the readers must have at least level B standing. Two of the members must be from Geography. In most cases, the same committee members evaluate the qualifying exam and supervise the thesis or internship.

5. Thesis/Internship

The application option of thesis or internship is chosen in consultation with the student's advisor. Neither the thesis nor the internship can be undertaken unless the student is making satisfactory progress (generally accepted to be a 3.0 cumulative grade point average). The application must consist of a minimum of 6 hours; a maximum of 12 hours is applicable to M.A. The course numbers associated with the two application options are: thesis (GEO 700), or internship (GEO 690).

A. Thesis Description

A thesis consists of a substantial original work of geographic research. The topic should fall within the competence of the faculty.

- 1) The thesis proposal is developed during the spring semester of the 1st year of the master's degree program in preparation for a period of original research during the summer.
- 2) Original research for the master's thesis is normally conducted during the summer between the 1st and 2nd year of the program.
- 3) The write-up of the thesis occurs primarily during the 2nd year of the program. In many cases, the main sections of a thesis will consist of (a) an introduction to the research, (b) a more refined literature review than that of the proposal, (c) a similarly refined description of methods, (d) a description of the data collection context and experience, (e) an analysis of the evidence collected, (f) a discussion of the findings, and (g) conclusions and suggestions for further research. The result of the thesis is an original contribution to geographical scholarship.

B. Internship Description

An internship is a period of employment outside the University in a public agency or private firm that can provide experiences appropriate to Master's-level training in Geography. The project is normally defined by the internship supervisor. While the research is conducted through an agency or firm, the research experience should be equivalent to that of a thesis.

- 1) The internship lasts a minimum of three months. The student may wish to extend it to six months or more.
- 2) The student has primary responsibility for identifying opportunities and applying for internship positions, but the faculty advisor should be consulted and kept informed of such applications. Duties to be performed during the internship must be specified in a document approved by the faculty advisor and the employer. The acceptance of an internship implies that a responsible employer will oversee the work assigned.
- 3) During the internship the student meets with this committee at least once a month to report on the progress of the internship. Alternatively, if the internship is distant from Oxford, a monthly written report, signed by the agency or firm supervisor, is submitted by the student to the internship committee.
- 4) The formal report submitted following the completion of the internship must include: a) a review of the literature/state-of-the-art relevant to the subject of the internship; b) a statement describing the initiation, nature, and specific purposes and arrangements of the internship; c) chapters on major tasks or studies undertaken; d) an evaluation of the internship experience itself including an assessment of the individual's academic training in preparation for the internship, an extended evaluation of specific research undertaken in fulfillment of the internship, and recommendations pertinent to improving the internship; e) copies of reports completed as part of the internship assignment as appendices.

C. Steps Toward Approval of the Thesis or Internship Proposal

The following is a step-by-step procedure for getting the thesis or internship proposal approved:

1. Determine your thesis/internship committee and file a "Thesis/Internship Committee" form with the department's administrative assistant. All committee members sign the form. **The deadline to file the form is January 15.**
2. Develop the proposal in consultation with your advisor and committee members.
3. If the research will involve human subjects, contact Miami University's IRB (Institutional Review Board) early in the semester to begin the process of gaining human subjects approval.
4. Present a preliminary proposal during the second half of the spring semester in GEO 601. This will include a literature review and initial description of thesis project or internship activity.
5. Present the full proposals to the department 2-3 weeks before the end of spring semester. Revise the written proposals based on faculty feedback on the presentation.
6. Submit the revised written proposal to the advisor.
7. Distribute the proposal to the other 2 committee members with the advisor's approval.
8. Arrange a meeting of the thesis/internship committee to defend the proposal.
9. From that meeting emerge the revisions are needed to have the committee tentatively approve the proposal.
10. Circulate the written proposal to the committee members, who are given a reasonable time period to offer further comments and suggestions.
11. Work with the advisor to take committee comments into consideration and finalize the proposal.
12. File a "Proposal Approval Form" with the department's administrative assistant. All committee members sign the form.
13. At this point the proposal is approved and the student can register for summer courses such as GEO 599 Field Research in Geography which helps to fund research or internship. (Students holding Graduate Assistantships and taking this workshop must

sign up for the Summer I (MA) session to receive a summer stipend. **Note that the Grad School does not pay Graduate Assistants the summer scholarship, which was \$1800 in 2007, until they *complete* their summer coursework.)**

The best interest of the student is served by selecting a topic as soon as possible, in close consultation with a faculty advisor. This allows both the student and advisor to arrange schedules that are convenient to each, reduce the pressures associated by last minute efforts and, if revisions or corrections of the proposal are necessary, deadlines can be met.

D. Submission of Completed Thesis or Internship Report.

All graduate students will need to electronically submit their thesis or internship reports. A designated staff member of the Graduate School office checks all internship reports and theses for style and format before they can be submitted to the library. If there is any doubt about style or format, students should take some pages to the Graduate School office to be checked before the final typing is done. Theses and internship reports should follow the current edition of the Graduate School's "Guide for Preparing Theses and Dissertations." It includes specific information about the preparation of such papers. Please check the graduate school's web page for the guide and submission instructions. A secondary set of guidelines are those adopted by the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *Geographical Review*, and *Economic Geography*. If a general question of style arises, the student is referred to *The Chicago Manual of Style* which is available in the university libraries. Students are expected to provide a professionally-bound copy of the thesis/internship report to the department.

6. Examinations

A. Qualifying Exam. The qualifying exam is a written exam, about four hours in length, taken during the second semester in residence. The exam emphasizes 2 themes: 1. general subject area of the planned thesis; and 2. methods relevant to the planned thesis. The specific content of the exam is defined by a committee of three faculty members, in consultation with the student. While the exam may concentrate on one or more subdisciplines of geography, the student should be able to apply general geographic concepts to problems or phenomena within those subdisciplines. At least two of the three examiners must be members of the Geography Department.

Following identification of the examination committee, the student must develop a bibliography of materials that defines the scope of the examination. Members of the examination committee may suggest modifications to this bibliography. All three examiners must approve the composition of the examination committee and topics to be examined. The final bibliographies are due February 15 of the student's first year and a hard copy should be submitted to the departmental office for our records.

The chair of the examination committee is responsible for gathering questions from the committee. A copy of these questions shall be delivered to the graduate advisor at least one week prior to the beginning of the exam.

The examination consists of two essays, submitted by the examiners. Both essays are read by all three committee members. The result of the exam is decided by majority vote of the committee. Four outcomes are possible: Pass with distinction, for students who demonstrate exceptional command of the subject; Pass, for students who demonstrate competence in the subject; Conditional Pass, for students who have certain areas to work on in order to pass; and Fail, for students who do not demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject. Students who fail

will have one more chance to take the exam. Results of the exam will be communicated to the student in a follow-up meeting of the committee not later than 10 days after the exam is completed. The committee chair (advisor) is responsible for filing a “Qualifying Exam Results” form with the department’s administrative assistant, with a copy of the exam answers attached. All committee members sign the form. A memo reporting the result must be placed in the student’s file,

A student who performs well in some areas but shows weakness in others may be required by the examination committee to submit additional work prior to its decision.

B. Internship/Thesis Final Exam. The final examination is an oral exam, taken after completion of all other degree requirements, focusing on a defense of the thesis, or internship report. The final examination committee consists of a minimum of three members of the Graduate Faculty.

7. Other Program Requirements

1. A maximum of eight hours of credit in 610 and 710 (Independent Study) courses may be applied toward the degree requirements and counted toward the cumulative average.
2. A student with an incomplete in a 610 or 710 must secure approval of the Graduate Program Advisor and the chair of the advising committee to register for another 610 or 710 course.
3. A student who has less than a 3.0 cumulative grade point average must secure approval of the Graduate Program Advisor and the thesis/internship advisor to register for a 690 or 700 course.
4. A student has the right to petition to the entire geography faculty concerning degree requirements.
5. Attend and participate in Friday afternoon seminars sponsored by department, whether or not you are registered for GEO 620 that semester.

Typical Timeline for Graduate Study

Summer before First Semester

- Register for GEO 605; the course is offered during the week prior to the beginning of Fall semester

First Semester

- Register for GEO 602 (4 credits) and other courses relevant to your interests. Full GAs need to register for minimum of 10 credit hours per semester, Modified GAs need to register for a minimum of 12 credit hours. These credit minima apply to all four semesters.
- Decide whether or not to take GEO 620 (Visiting Speaker Series) this semester; you need to take GEO 620 at least twice during your four semesters of MA work. The list of speakers should be available early each semester
- All First Year Grad students should meet (as a group or individually) with your Interim Advisory Committee (which is the Graduate Studies Committee), which will advise you during this period before you choose a Thesis/Internship Committee
- Use this semester to systematically explore potential topics for thesis or internship
- Decide on a topic and committee by end of semester
- Submit a preliminary request for funding for summer thesis research

Second Semester

- Register for GEO 601 - Geographic Research (3 credit hours), – complete qualifying exam during the week before Spring Break and Thesis/Internship Proposal by the end of the semester
- Register with your advisor for GEO 610 – Independent Study for Proposal Preparation (3 credit hours)
- Decide whether or not to take GEO 620 (Visiting Speaker Series)
- Officially select your advisory committee and topic; meet with this committee early in the semester and decide on the topics and bibliographies for the qualifying exam
- Study for qualifying exam
- Prepare 2 bibliographies for qualifying exam; the final bibliographies are due to your committee members February 15 (also file a copy in the Geography Office)
- Begin work on your thesis/internship proposal early in the semester
- Meet w/advisor bi-weekly to move proposal forward
- Present proposal to department during and at the end of the semester.
- Submit up-dated request for funding for summer thesis research

First Summer

- Conduct thesis research or perform internship

Third Semester

- Meet with committee early in term to present summer research report and get advice on thesis.
- Decide whether or not to take GEO 620 (Visiting Speaker Series)
- Write thesis or internship

Fourth Semester & Second Summer

- Fourth semester: Decide whether or not to take GEO 620 (Visiting Speaker Series)
- Finish and defend thesis or internship
- Attend workshop at King Library on submitting your thesis electronically (offered 3 times per semester).

Graduate Assistant Responsibilities

At the discretion of the Department a student may be assigned to assist in teaching, research, or a combination of the two. Although the assignments differ with respect to type of duty, they are similar relative to remuneration and hour load responsibility. It is expected that an assistant be available from pre-registration before classes begin to commencement at the end of the period. A student must have the permission of the Department Chair to arrive late or leave early.

Graduate Assistants are employees of the University and are expected to carry out their duties in a responsible manner, and adhere to relevant University policies regarding teaching practices and professional conduct.

1. Responsibilities of Assistants with Teaching Duties

Teaching assistants are assigned to one or more faculty members in order to assist with course responsibilities. The assistant's duties are worked out by the Department and by the particular faculty member(s) to whom he/she is assigned. These duties ordinarily include conducting discussion sections, preparing and grading tests, holding office hours, preparing materials, and generally assisting in administering details of the course. Teaching assistants may also be assigned to the Geographic Information Systems Lab to assist students in their work. These duties involve an average of 18-20 hours per week for a half-time graduate assistant and 8-10 hours for a modified graduate assistant.

2. Responsibilities of Assistants with Research Duties

The research assistant is assigned to a staff member, a group of staff members, or to the entire Department for the purpose of assisting the staff with their research endeavors. Again, 18 to 20 hours per week should be devoted to the assignment. It is the responsibility of the staff member(s) to have material and instructions organized and ready for the assistant.

Graduate Students in Residence for 2007-2008

<i>Sara Crangle</i>	University of Kansas
<i>Harley Deka</i>	University of Nairobi
<i>Jia Feng</i>	Nanjing University
<i>Kristy Fortman</i>	University of Colorado
<i>Grant Garstka</i>	DePaul University
<i>Amy Gillespie</i>	Northern Kentucky University
<i>Paul Holeva</i>	Northern Michigan University
<i>Tatenda Mambo</i>	California State Polytechnic University
<i>Emma Mullaney</i>	Sarah Lawrence College
<i>Heather Roades</i>	Shawnee State University
<i>Christopher Thompson</i>	Miami University
<i>Brody Walters</i>	Miami University
<i>Trent Williams</i>	University of South Carolina
<i>Neil Winn</i>	Shawnee State University
<i>Wan Yu</i>	Peking University

Graduate Faculty

- Carl Dahlman*, Ph.D., University of Kentucky, 2001. Associate Professor. Interests: Political Geography, Migration, Space & Identity, Europe, Middle East.
- Bruce D’Arcus*, Ph.D., Syracuse University, 2001. Assistant Professor. Interests: Political and cultural geography, social theory, public space.
- Marcia England*, Ph.D., University of Kentucky, 2006. Assistant Professor. Interests: Marginalized populations in public space, urban policing, and community government associations.
- Jerry E. Green*, Ph.D., University of North Carolina, 1976. Assistant Professor. Interests: Physical, resource analysis, land use analysis.
- Mary C. Henry*, Ph.D., University of Arizona, 2002. Assistant Professor. Interests: Biogeography, remote sensing, fire ecology, landscape ecology.
- Thomas Klak*, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1987. Professor. Interests: Economic and social development, sustainability, Latin America and the Caribbean.
- John K. Maingi*, Ph.D., University of Arizona, 1998. Assistant Professor. Interests: Remote sensing, GIS, forest ecology.
- Kimberly E. Medley*, Ph.D., Michigan State, 1990. Professor. Interests: Ecological and cultural biogeography, conservation, gender analysis, landscapes.
- David Prytherch*, Ph.D., University of Arizona, 2003. Assistant Professor. Interests: Urban geography, cultural geography, human/environment relations.
- William H. Renwick*, Ph.D., Clark University, 1979. Professor and Chair. Interests: Geomorphology, fluvial processes, environmental management.
- James M. Rubenstein*, Ph.D., The Johns Hopkins University, 1975. Professor. Interests: Planning, urban policy analysis, automotive industry.
- Liza Skrizhevskaya*, Ph.D., University of Idaho, 2007. Assistant Professor, Hamilton Campus. Interests: Human and social geography, regional development, geographic information systems, Eastern Europe including post-Soviet countries.
- Stanley W. Toops*, Ph.D., University of Washington, 1990. Associate Professor, Geography and International Studies. Interests: East Asia, development, ethnicity, tourism.
- Ian E. A. Yeboah*, Ph.D., University of Calgary, 1994. Associate Professor, Geography and Black World Studies. Interests: Urban, economic, development, planning, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Visiting Faculty:

Jamie Gillen, Ph.D. candidate, University of Colorado, Visiting Instructor. Interests: Cultural and economic transformations in developing urban areas, entrepreneurialism, tourism, social theory, Vietnam & Southeast Asia.

GIS Coordinator:

Robbyn Abbitt, M.S., University of Idaho, 1999, GIS Coordinator. Interests: natural resource management, conservation, local land use planning, water resources, endangered species.

Emeritus Faculty:

Robert S. Bacon, Ph.D., University of Colorado, 1975. Interests: Urban residential segregation; internal urban structure; immigrant migration in the United States; geographic concepts; social area analysis; settlement patterns.

Martin Dulgarian, Ph.D., The University of Michigan, 1965. Interests: Middle East; political; geographic thought; and interdisciplinary studies.

John C. Klink, Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 1974. Interests: Global solar radiation climatology; meteorological-climatological instrumentation; quality and analysis of climatological data; synoptic climatology; soils.

Howell C. Lloyd, Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1964. Interests: Political, Europe, ethnic regionalism.

Richard V. Smith, Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1957. Interests: Recreational user and resource issues and problems; community information; tourism; population/resource relationships; environmental policy.

John L. Thompson, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, 1955. Interests: Environmental problems and conservation; river recreational development; geography of energy; physical geography; Soviet agriculture.

Gene E. Willeke, Ph.D., Stanford University, 1969. Director Emeritus, Institute of Environmental Sciences. Interests: Environmental impact assessment; problem-solving methodology; social, economic, political, and environmental aspects of natural hazard perception and adjustment; drought climatology.

Cyrus W. Young, Ph.D., Michigan State University, 1970. Interests: Retail site location models; urban geography; geographic information systems.