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I INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to introduce new graduate students to the basic educational and administrative structures of the Geography Department. It is not designed to answer every question a new student may have, but it should be helpful during the period of initial orientation to Geography at Syracuse and thereafter as a basic reference to our program. **It is recommended that you retain this guide for future reference.**

The Geography Department is part of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs; the department’s administrative office, several faculty offices, and the James Library are located on the first floor of Eggers Hall. The Maxwell School is essentially the Social Science division of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School, but is more or less autonomous, having its own Dean and administrative officers. As well as geography, it includes history, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, public administration, international relations and various interdisciplinary programs. All students are invited to join the Maxwell Graduate Student Organization, to which the department annually elects a representative.

The department makes every effort to foster a close and open working relationship between faculty and students. We feel that this is the key to a successful, stimulating, and pleasant intellectual environment. Maintaining such an environment requires the cooperation and participation of all members of the department. It is expected, therefore, that students will take part in activities outside of formal classes and seminars. There are many opportunities: the geography colloquium, student seminars, visiting lectures, and similar activities outside the department within Maxwell and elsewhere. Participation in these events benefits both individual graduate students and the departmental community.

In particular, graduate students are expected to attend the Departmental Colloquia (normally held on Friday afternoons and followed by refreshments).

Faculty members and many of the graduate students are members of the Association of American Geographers (AAG), which offers special membership rates for students. We strongly urge you to join. There are many benefits, including all publications of the AAG – Journals as well as the monthly Newsletter, which contains the useful Jobs in Geography listings. Syracuse is in the Middle States Division of the AAG. A Divisional Meeting is held every October, and national meetings are held annually either in March or April. Students are encouraged to attend and to offer papers at both meetings, as appropriate. The department does offer grants to support graduate students who are on the program at scholarly meetings; the amount varies annually according to budgetary constraints.

II ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

The Geography Department is governed by the Faculty. The Faculty consists of professors of various ranks who hold regular appointments.

The Faculty has a Chair appointed to a three-year term of office by the Dean of the Maxwell School; in making this appointment the Dean is guided by a faculty recommendation (typically in the form of a vote) with respect to the Chair. The Chair presides over day to day administration of the department and represents it to the Maxwell School, the College of Arts and Sciences, and other appropriate university units and officials. Faculty responsibilities center on matters related to personnel, over which it has final jurisdiction. In addition, it sets and oversees the curriculum.
and the scheduling of classes. Most decisions are made by the entire regularly appointed faculty. The exceptions are the Tenure and Promotions Committees, which are restricted on the basis of rank and tenure. Consensus is sought in decision-making but, if a vote is required, a simple majority prevails.

The Faculty makes decisions at departmental meetings held at least monthly during the academic year. Graduate students elect two representatives to the departmental meetings who share one full vote between them. Graduate student representatives attend all parts of the meeting except those dealing with graduate student or faculty personnel matters. Likewise, graduate student representatives vote on all issues except those related to graduate student and faculty personnel issues.

In addition to departmental meetings, Departmental decisions are made by four standing committees: The Chair’s Advisory Committee; the Graduate Committee (which also serves as the Graduate Admissions and Awards Committee); the Undergraduate Committee; and the Colloquium and Public Relations Committee. Graduate students are appointed to each of these committees except the Chairs Advisory Committee (which mostly handles personnel issues). Graduate Student members are full members of each committee. However, the graduate student member of the Graduate Committee is not party to and does not vote on matters concerning his/her current peers.

Graduate Director—A faculty member appointed by the departmental Chair serves as the Director of Graduate Studies of the department. Duties of the position include:

- Chairing the Graduate Committee
- Acting as liaison between graduate students and faculty
- Representing the department to other university committees and officials in relation to graduate affairs
- Recruiting new graduate students
- Making graduate personnel assignments in consultation with the Chair and faculty
- Maintaining the currency of graduate student files

Students should feel free to speak with their advisors, the Graduate Director, and the Department Chair about any matter of concern.

### III  FINANCIAL AID

Fellowship, Graduate Assistantship and other financial awards are made each spring for the following academic year. For some of these awards, the dates for application and notification are set by the Graduate School. The allocation of awards is a complex process involving a number of considerations, the main points of which follow.

There are never sufficient awards available to support all students admitted to the graduate program.

Not all of the awards are controlled by the Geography Department; some are competitive within the Maxwell School or University and the department can only nominate candidates.
Awards are allocated on the basis of academic merit, which may be measured by overall academic performance, or as needed, the specific technical abilities to fill a given position.

It is the policy of the department to give funding priority to returning students demonstrating satisfactory progress toward their degree. M.A. students in good standing are eligible for two years of funding and Ph.D. students in good standing are eligible for three years, post M.A. A student in good standing must: 1) have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better, 2) not have two or more Incompletes over two semesters, 3) have performed adequately in their Teaching Assistant or other Graduate Assistant assignments, and 4) not have earned any grade C in degree coursework. Failure to meet any of these criteria shall constitute grounds for denial of funding. Such decisions are made on a case by case basis, and consideration is given to extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness or other personal problems). Students whose funding has been discontinued for reasons of performance may request reconsideration.

According to University policy, students who take a formal university-approved leave of absence must apply for readmission. According to department policy: 1) any student in good standing who takes such a leave and reappears within two years or less, will normally be prioritized for funding over new student admissions; 2) any student in good standing who takes such a leave and reappears after two years, will not be prioritized for admission and funding over new student admissions; 3) any student who leaves the program by failing to register for “zero credits thesis/dissertation” for more than a semester must petition the faculty regarding their funding eligibility; such a petition will not be prioritized over new student admissions when awarding financial aid.

The departmental Committee on Graduate Admissions and Awards (often referred to as “the Graduate Committee”), comprising the Graduate Director, two other faculty members (with the department Chair as an ex-officio member) and a graduate student, is responsible for admissions and funding. These decisions are made in consultation with other members of the faculty.

The initial pattern of awards is unlikely to be final. Non-acceptance, resignations, new sources of aid, and similar matters almost always cause a number of changes. Students are sometimes requested to consider shifting from one form of aid to another, in order that a maximum number of awards can be allocated among the greatest number of applicants.

University regulations require that students holding Assistantships work an average of approximately 20 hours per week.

The department expects all students to seek grants and fellowships from sources outside the University, especially for dissertation research. The Graduate School and the Maxwell School maintain lists of potential support and a Fellowship File is also maintained in the department office.

Students seeking part-time employment should determine if they qualify for the federal “Work Study Program” through the Financial Aid Office of the University.

**Summer funding:** Graduate students can apply each Spring for several summer funding opportunities that are available through the department. These are competitive, merit-based awards.

**Summer Teaching**—The department typically seeks instructors each year for one or two geography courses that are offered through University College during the summer sessions.
Salaries for graduate student instructors are set by University College and vary depending on qualifications. Preference is normally given to faculty and doctoral students although qualified master’s students are encouraged to apply. All appointments are made by the Department Chair, in consultation with the Geography faculty.

Maxwell and Graduate School Summer Research Award (formerly two separate awards) — This award is intended to help defray the costs of activities that advance the student’s research agenda, or can be used to help defray the costs of a professional development experience, such as language training or a relevant workshop. Award recipients may be asked to report to the department on some aspect of their professional development experience at a brown-bag lunch or Friday colloquium meeting during the following fall semester.

M.A. students will be guaranteed one year of summer funding, receiving the maximum award. This only holds if the student does not have external support that is equal to or greater than the combined amount of a fellowship and summer award.

Ph.D. students will be guaranteed summer funding following their first and second years of residence, receiving the maximum award each year. This only holds only if the student does not have external support that is equal to or greater than the combined amount of a fellowship and summer award. Remaining funds will be available for current students with the following priority:

- Completion of field-work (highest priority)
- Attending workshop or conference that has clear professional development and networking potential (moderate priority)
- All other requests (including finishing writing thesis/dissertation; studying for qualifying exams; Syracuse-based transcription, data analysis, etc.) (low priority)

David E. Sopher Memorial Scholarships—This scholarship memorializes our deceased colleague, Professor David E. Sopher, a friend, mentor and colleague to many of the faculty and numerous Syracuse graduate alumni. The scholarship carries a stipend and is for the support of a graduate student’s research. Students in good academic standing and with research interests either in South Asia or cultural-social geography regardless of regional focus are eligible. Preference is normally given to doctoral students. Sopher Scholarships are awarded in the Fall; there may be one or two per year, depending on available resources.

IV GRADUATE (Teaching and Research) ASSISTANTS

The department seeks to prepare graduate students to be skilled teachers and researchers. For many graduate students, much of this preparation occurs while serving as a graduate assistant—either as a Teaching Assistant (TA) or a Research Assistant (RA). TAs serve a primary function of providing support for faculty undergraduate teaching while RAs serve a primary function of supporting faculty research. In both cases, the role of the TA/RA is to alleviate some of the workload of their faculty supervisor. It should be recognized, however, that this is also a professional and academic learning experience for TAs/RAs to develop skills of their own.

Students and professors are asked prior to the start of each semester to submit assignment preferences to the Graduate Director. Every effort is made to honor these preferences—balancing
both faculty and student requests, although it is seldom possible to meet everyone’s first request. Changes in course offerings and enrollments means that some changes in TA assignments must be made between semesters. Research Assistant (RAs) interests, skills, and plans for future development are also considered in assignments.

Though the requirements and expectations will differ for each TA or RA assignment, it is assumed that a relationship of mutual respect and collective effort will be maintained. Though difficult to dictate, an attempt should be made to keep a positive rapport between supervisor and assistant. This includes keeping communication lines open on both ends.

University regulations require that students holding assistantships work an average of 20 hours per week during the period of their appointment. (The 20-hour average pertains to the payroll schedule. The exact dates that the pay period begins and ends each academic year will be indicated in each TA/RA contract letter.) For the Department of Geography, workloads should not exceed 20 hours a week on average over the course of the semester work period, although the exact number of hours worked will vary from week to week.

In some instances, TAs/RAs may be asked by their supervisor to work when classes are not in session. In these cases, the assistant and supervisor should negotiate the work schedule in advance. The semester work period begins two-and-one-half workdays before the start of classes. Normally, for RAs the work period ends two-and-one-half workdays after the last day of classes. However, this may be negotiated with the supervisor, depending on the Assistant’s academic and personal schedule. For TAs the end of the semester work period will vary depending on personal and final exam schedules, and should be negotiated well in advance between supervisor and the assistant. Both the Assistant and supervisor should anticipate the fluctuations of workload and needed time-off, and plan accordingly. Supervisors should allow for flexibility of winter and summer vacation, travel, and research plans. The TA/RA must inform their supervisor ahead of time if requesting additional time-off.

Assistants are strongly encouraged to maintain a work log that details the hours they work each week. Any work done for the appointment (including meetings, photocopying, and e-mail correspondence) is considered part of the average 20 hours per week. This work log should be presented to the supervisor periodically to ensure mutual agreement of time expenditures. FPP/PFF commitments do not contribute to the 20 hours per week, but the required TA training conducted by the University prior to a teaching position is included. (If an RA attends TA training, anticipating that s/he may become a TA in a subsequent semester, then this time is included in his/her total semester hours. In this case, the RA’s supervisor should be notified by both the RA and the graduate director prior to the training.) These stipulations do not include summer recess employment. If a student is employed over the summer recess, specifications should be made at the time of the appointment between TA/RA and supervisor.

Syracuse University recognizes certain official school holidays when the office is closed, and TAs/RAs are not required to work. These include: Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day, (Memorial Day and Independence Day if a summer employee.) There are also typically three floating holiday in the vicinity of Christmas, Thanksgiving, or Independence Day to allow for longer holidays.

TA work may include grading, preparing and leading discussion sections, conducting review sessions, photocopying, recording grades/attendance, and other tasks related to the assigned course. In each instance, the responsibilities of both the TA/RA and supervisor should be clearly delineated at the onset of their working relationship. This will allow for any issues of conflicting
expectations to be resolved before problems arise. Unless other arrangements are made, TAs are expected to attend the lectures supervisor holds. Regular meetings between the TAs/RAs and their supervisors are strongly encouraged to keep communications lines clear. TAs are required to hold at least two regular office hours weekly.

The following steps should be taken if at any time a conflict arises between a TA/RA and their faculty supervisor that cannot be resolved between those parties in an informal way.

a. The Graduate Director and Department Chair should be notified and serve as mediator(s) in subsequent meetings between both parties. The Graduate Director and Chair may also consult the graduate committee and chair’s advisory committee, but should only do so with the approval of the parties involved. In some instances, the mediating services of the Maxwell School’s Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts (PARC) may be helpful in resolving disputes.

b. If the step outlined above in [a] does not result in an acceptable resolution, then the parties involved, in consultation with the Chair and Graduate Director, may seek resolution through a formal meeting at the Departmental level. In this case, each party should prepare a short written statement summarizing his or her position. No student or faculty member (including temporary or post-doctoral instructors) will be penalized for filing such a statement. A one-page statement summarizing the meeting should be written by the Chair. These documents will be retained by the parties involved but will not be placed in the department’s student or faculty files.

c. If the dispute cannot be resolved within the Department, parties should seek mediation at the level of the Maxwell Dean’s Office, and then at the level of the University Senate’s Subcommittee for Academic Freedom, Tenure, Promotion and Ethics (AFTPE).

At the conclusion of each semester, TAs/RAs are evaluated by their supervisors, who will write an assessment of their performance. This should be considered a tool for professional development, and should be discussed and signed by both supervisor and assistant. Copies of this assessment will be made available to the Assistant, and will be placed in the students’ permanent file. Students have the right to rebut negative evaluations in writing. In rare instances, a negative evaluation may result in a decision not to continue aid to a student. In such cases, the student involved has the right to (and is encouraged to) request a meeting with the committee and the supervising faculty member to discuss and reevaluate the negative decision.

V ADVISORY SYSTEM

The Graduate Director assigns a provisional advisory committee to each new student. This assignment will be made before classes begin in August. The initial advising assignments are considered temporary, and may be changed at the request of the student any time before the second week of the second semester in residence. Students must have an advisory committee, and by the beginning of their 2nd year have a principal advisor. If no faculty member is willing to serve as a principal advisor, then the student must take a leave of absence until such time as there is agreement to advise. If a principal advisor is not secured within 2 years of the beginning of the leave of absence, then the student is required to withdraw from the program.

Returning students must meet with their advisors within the first two weeks of each semester in order to review previous course work and research, and to discuss future plans. A student might wish to change advisors at a later stage in her/his program because of such factors as new or
modified academic interests, personality conflicts, extended absence of the advisor from the
campus, or the advisor’s excessive work load. Any student contemplating a change should
consult with the Graduate Director early in the process, and the parties involved must make
certain that they inform the Graduate Director immediately after the change is made. A notice of
this change will be placed in the student’s file.

Every student will have an Advisory Committee that minimally consists of:

a. For the M.A. - the advisor and one other geography faculty member.

b. For the Ph.D. - the advisor and two other geography faculty members.

Although, more members may be added to the Advisory Committee if desired, it is not
recommended due to scheduling difficulties associated with larger committees. The additional
members may be from the Geography Faculty or from other regular faculty at SU/SUNY ESF.

The Advisory Committee for M.A. students forms the core of the M. A. Oral Examination
Committee (which requires a total of four members; see Section VI, D, below).

The Advisory Committee for Ph.D. students administers the Qualifying Examination. It also
forms the core of the Dissertation Oral Examination Committee (which requires a total of six
members; see Section VII, F, below).

The Annual Review: The purpose of the Annual Review is for students to meet with their
Advisory Committee to discuss progress in the program, funding issues, plans for
thesis/dissertation, exams or other requirements, performance as a teaching/research assistant,
concerns related to the program and department, or other matters.

Before the Annual Review, the student completes an Annual Review form (see appendix IV; an
electronic version can also be requested from the Graduate Director) and distributes it to the
Advisory Committee. After the meeting, the Advisor prepares a draft report and distributes it to
the student and other attendees at the meeting. When the student and Advisory Committee have
approved final wording, the Advisor, and the student sign it. The Advisor distributes copies to all
attendees and provides a copy of the report and the Annual Review form to the graduate secretary
to be deposited in the student’s file.

It is the responsibility of the student to schedule an annual review during each academic year. It
is anticipated, but not required, that first year students will find this most useful in the Spring
semester, after having had some exposure to the program, and that continuing students will find it
more useful to schedule their reviews in the Fall. All graduate students should schedule their
annual reviews before the latter part of the Spring semester, to avoid schedule conflicts with the
many meetings and thesis defenses that typically occupy faculty at the end of the academic year.

An ABD student may submit a progress report to their advisor and the Graduate Director in lieu
of the annual review. A meeting is not required, but may be requested by the student or the
advisor, if necessary.

If a student is meeting with his/her committee for some other reason (e.g. for a proposal
presentation), then it is acceptable to use that occasion for the annual review as well. Conversely,
additional meetings between students and their advisory committees at other times are
encouraged.
VI. M.A. PROGRAM

The Standard M.A. Program consists of 30 hours of approved graduate credit. The Graduate School requires that at least half of the 30 hours be at the 600 level or above.

The M.A. Program requires exposure to the breadth of geography as studied by faculty in the department. Such exposure must include work in the area of environment-society as well as in human and physical geography. Minimum exposure would be equivalent to basic survey courses in those subjects at Syracuse. A student who does not have this exposure should discuss this issue with his/her advisory committee and the graduate director and decide upon a suitable plan for acquiring it, whether by attending undergraduate courses, auditing, or reading. A copy of this plan must be placed in the student’s file and the advisor is responsible for ensuring completion of the same. To ensure a solid geographic training at the graduate level, the Geography Department requires that the student take no more than a total of two Independent Studies (690) and Readings and Special Work in Geography (609). Further, a student must take Geography courses from four or more different Geography faculty, as part of their 30 hours of course work.

A. M.A. Requirements

Several coursework requirements apply to the standard 30-hour M.A. Program:

- GEO 602 (Research Design in Geography)
- GEO 603 (Geographic Thought, formerly GEO 805)
- EITHER
  - Option A
    - Two Seminars (numbered 700 or above) from different Geography faculty, and
    - One spatial methods/techniques course (see approved list below)
  - OR
  - Option B
    - One Seminar (numbered 700 or above) from Geography faculty, and
    - Two spatial methods/techniques courses (see approved list below)
- 30 hours of graduate credit (including option A or B above), with at least 15 of those hours numbered 600 or above. May include up to 6 hours of GEO 997 (Thesis)
- No more than 2 independent studies (Geo 609 or 690); Geography courses from at least 4 Geography faculty
- No more than 48 hours of graduate credit while M.A. student

[Spatial methods/techniques courses include: GEO 681 (Map Design), GEO 683 (Geographic Information Systems), GEO 685 (Qualitative Methods), GEO 686 (Advanced Quantitative Geographic Analysis), GEO 686 (Environmental Remote Sensing)]

Students may meet the requirements of the M.A. Program by selecting one of two options. This selection must be made prior to the start of his/her third regular semester in the M.A. Program. Both options require an oral examination. When scheduling the oral exam, the student should
provide committee members with a copy of the Program of Study, approved and signed by the Graduate Director.

In addition to the coursework requirements, for successful progress through the program, students must adhere to the following department policies.

- Students must have an advisory committee, and by the beginning of their 2nd year have a principal advisor. If no faculty member is willing to serve as a principal advisor, then the student must take a leave of absence until such time as there is agreement to advise. If a principal advisor is not secured within 2 years of the beginning of the leave of absence, then the student is required to withdraw from the program.

- Students must meet with their advisor and/or advisory committee to determine course selections each semester.

B. M.A. by Thesis

The Master’s thesis is written on a topic approved by and under the supervision of the student’s advisory committee. The standard thesis carries six credit hours and it is expected that it will be completed and defended no later than the end of the second year in residence. A thesis should be limited enough in its scope and length so that it can be completed within a two-year M.A. program.

A thesis may range in type from one which presents a critical review of the literature of a subfield, to others which carry out field or laboratory research. A thesis may make an original contribution to knowledge. However, originality, while never discouraged, is not the main ingredient. Rather the assessment of the M.A. thesis is typically based upon: the adequacy of the definition of the research problem; the design of the research strategy; the skills demonstrated in collection, analysis and interpretation of data; the currency of understanding of the supporting literature, and finally the argument, logic and elegance expressed in the written word and graphical illustration.

C. M.A. by Master’s Papers

Two Master’s papers may be submitted as a second option to meet the M.A. degree requirements. These carry no credit hours and are not subject to Graduate School regulations.

Master’s papers may be submitted and approved at any stage of a student’s M.A. program.

Students considering this option should understand the following:

- A Master’s paper should be viewed as a manuscript in the style and form of a journal article. Normally it should be derived from previous work in a course or seminar and should not exceed 25 manuscript pages in length. It is expected that a Master’s paper will be of higher quality than the usual seminar paper or term report as a result of consultation and refinement. The Master’s paper must incorporate an up-to-date understanding of the supporting literature.

- Each Master’s paper must be approved by two members of the Geography faculty.
• When approved, two approved and signed copies of the Master’s papers should be placed in the student’s departmental file. One of these copies will be bound by the department and placed in the James Library.

D. Oral Examination

Completed and advisor-approved theses and master’s papers must be submitted to the examination committee at least two weeks before the oral exam.

With respect to all of the above options, the final step in the M.A. program is an oral examination given after all coursework and the thesis or Master’s papers have been completed. The oral exam will usually focus on the thesis or subjects of the Master’s papers. The oral exam normally lasts two hours. The examining committee consists of the advisor and two other faculty members, one of whom must be from the department. A fourth non-geography, S.U. faculty member serves as chair of the examination and reports the results to the Graduate School.

The department requires that all students pursuing the M.A. demonstrate currency of knowledge in their oral examination, whether they are earning their degree via the Thesis, or Two-Paper option.

At the end of the oral examination the examining committee votes on whether to recommend that the student be awarded the M.A. The decision is transmitted by the chair of the examining committee to the Graduate School. General rules governing graduate exams are available from the Graduate School.

Each student completing the M.A. thesis option and the M.A. two-paper option is considered at the time of their thesis/paper oral examination for the honor of graduating “with distinction.” This honor is reserved for students who demonstrate superior performances in both the oral examination and the written thesis/papers. It requires a unanimous favorable vote from all members of the student’s examining committee. The result—if positive—is reported by the Examination Chair to the student, the Graduate Director and the Graduate School. The Graduate Director will inform the department when a student has earned this award.

E. Continuity of Study

According to University policy, all requirements for the master’s degree must be completed within a period of seven years from the date the student registers for the first course to be used in her or his advanced degree program. If the degree is not obtained within this seven-year period, a student may petition the department and the Graduate School for reinstatement of credit in an outdated course, stating the rationale for maintaining currency of knowledge. The department further requires that all students pursuing the M.A. demonstrate currency of knowledge in their final written work and oral examination, whether they are earning their degree via the Thesis or Two-Paper option.

F. Minimum Basic Requirements for Satisfactory Progress

For continued matriculation and consideration for any funding or financial aid, M.A. students must: 1) have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better, 2) not have two or more Incompletes over two semesters, 3) have performed adequately in their Teaching Assistant or other Graduate Assistant assignments, and 4) not have earned any grade C in degree coursework, 5) by the beginning of their 2nd year must have a principal advisor. If no faculty member is willing to serve as a principal advisor, then the student must take a leave of absence until such time as there is agreement to
advise. Failure to meet any of these criteria shall constitute grounds for denial of funding. Such
decisions are made on a case by case basis, and consideration is given to extenuating
circumstances (e.g., illness or other personal problems). Students whose funding has been
discontinued for reasons of performance may request reconsideration.

G. Internal Application/Admission to the Ph.D. Program

Each fall semester, the graduate director will solicit second-year M.A. students regarding their
interest in continuing on for the Ph.D. program in Geography at Syracuse University. Students
who indicate such interest will be asked to submit a “Graduate School Internal Admission
Application” to the department’s Graduate Admissions and Awards Committee by January 1st.
The application must be accompanied by: a) a personal statement that provides a clear discussion
of the proposed doctoral program of study; and b) letters of support from the intended doctoral
advisor and from another member of the geography faculty.

The Graduate Admissions and Awards Committee will consider all internal admission
applications in January and February when it reviews external admission applications. The
Graduate Admissions and Awards Committee will inform the student and his/her advisor about
admission. Any decision that the Committee makes regarding an internal admission is
provisional until the M.A. degree has been conferred by the University.

Continuing M.A. students will be considered for funding for the Ph.D. program according to the
following protocol:

a. A continuing M.A. student who is admitted to the Ph.D. program will be given priority
consideration for funding for the next academic year over external admission students.

b. All internal admission applications received by the Graduate Committee will be ranked.
If available, funding lines will be offered to internal admission students according to their
ranked position.

c. The continuing student’s adviser must provide a letter to the Graduate Committee by
April 15th, saying that she or he has read a complete first-draft of the M.A. thesis or
papers and believes that there is the highest of likelihoods that the student will take the
oral examination by August 10th.

d. At the M.A. oral examination, the examination chair will work with the M.A. examining
committee to create a final recommendation for the Graduate Committee regarding
admission to the doctoral program. If no such recommendation has been received by
August 10th, funding to begin the Ph.D. program may be denied.

H. Staying or Going Elsewhere

Since the decision to move on into a doctoral program of study is of critical significance, M.A.
students nearing completion are reminded that they need to consider various factors in deciding to
which departments they will apply. The presence of a faculty member who is prepared to work
closely with the student, the reputation of a department in the research subfield, adequate
resources (e.g., library holdings or laboratory facilities), and adequate technical support services
need to be carefully assessed. As well as considering Syracuse’s doctoral program, students are
encouraged to consider applying to other departments since exposure to the various application
processes, interviews, and other academic contexts can be valuable.
VII Ph.D. PROGRAM

The Ph.D. degree requires a minimum of 72 credit hours of approved graduate work in geography and related fields. The 72 hours may include credits accepted from the Master’s degree. Doctoral students must obtain a minimum of 60 hours of approved course work and a minimum of 12 dissertation hours (GEO 999). Students with an approved Master’s degree from another university must take at least 30 hours of course work in residence at Syracuse (not including the dissertation), including at least 20 hours of work at the 600 level or above. Up to 30 credits from a completed Master’s degree at another institution may be counted toward the 60 for the Ph.D. This is not automatic – the student must take responsibility to prepare a petition to the Graduate School to have the credits counted toward his/her program of study. Students who completed an M.A. in this department may count up to 6 thesis credits toward the 60 credits of required course work. At least two-thirds of the required course work (not including the dissertation) must be at the 600 level or above.

The following departmental requirements should be understood by all Ph.D. students and anticipated in planning their academic program:

A. General and Specific Course Requirements

It is expected that students who enter the Ph.D. program with a Master’s degree from another university will have, or will acquire, qualifications equivalent to those normally achieved by a Syracuse M.A. in geography (in particular, note that the breadth requirements described in VI above apply).

Specific course requirements, in addition to the dissertation hours mentioned above, include:

- GEO 602 (Research Design in Geography)
- GEO 603 (Geographic Thought, formerly GEO 805)
- EITHER
  - Option A
    - Two Seminars (numbered 700 or above) from different Geography faculty, and
    - One spatial methods/techniques course (see approved list below)
  - OR
  - Option B
    - One Seminar (numbered 700 or above) from Geography faculty, and
    - Two spatial methods/techniques courses (see approved list below)

[ Spatial methods/techniques courses include: GEO 681 (Map Design), GEO 683 (Geographic Information Systems), GEO 685 (Qualitative Methods), GEO 686 (Advanced Quantitative Geographic Analysis), GEO 686 (Environmental Remote Sensing) ]

- No more than 2 independent studies (Geo 609 or 690; total of 4 if M.A. completed at SU); Geography courses from at least 4 Geography faculty.
B. Areas of Competence

A Ph.D. student must demonstrate through written and oral examinations (the Qualifying Examination) special competence in three fields. Fields of competence may be defined by specialty groups, common upper division courses, emerging areas of study, regions, or major methodologies, including theoretical perspectives.

In consultation with their advisor, Ph.D. students are encouraged to take appropriate courses outside the Geography Department. These courses need not be in any one outside field but should comprise a coherent component that relates to and strengthens the student’s regional or topical fields.

A doctoral student who proposes to undertake research in a non-English speaking area is required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of her or his Advisory Committee the necessary language skills before taking the Qualifying Examination.

C. Dissertation Proposal

Each student must prepare a formal dissertation proposal, which must be approved at a meeting with the student’s advisory committee prior to the scheduling of the qualifying examination. Advisors may require their students to formally defend their proposal at this meeting. A copy of the approved dissertation proposal must be filed in the student’s Departmental file.

D. Ph.D. Qualifying Examination

Before taking the Qualifying Exam a student must complete all University and departmental requirements except the dissertation. In other words all course work must be completed, the dissertation proposal approved, and competence in specified research skills demonstrated. Two weeks before the examination, the student should notify the Graduate Director, who will need to sign the Program of Study, which verifies that all course work requirements will have been met by the end of the semester in which the examination occurs.

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is to evaluate whether or not a student is prepared to teach and conduct research at the collegiate level. In general terms, questions are asked that test knowledge of (a) the scope, historical development, and current debates in the student’s fields of interest (including how they fit into the history of geography); (b) the main theoretical and methodological approaches to the fields of interest; and (c) as appropriate, the specific techniques (e.g. specific statistical, qualitative, GIS, cartographic, language, or other skills) necessary to undertake and evaluate research in the fields of interest.

Scope of the Exams: In consultation with their Advisory Committees, students are required to develop three fields of competence (see Section B above).

Students will meet with their Advisory Committees before sitting the examination to both define and delimit their fields of competence. The purpose of this meeting is to establish the specific “ground rules” for the examination, so that both student and committee are clear on what is expected.

Exam Format and Timing: The examination has both written and oral parts. For the written portion of the exam, a full day will typically be devoted to each field of competence; however, at the discretion of the Advisory Committee and student, one field of competence may be examined
in an un-timed manner. The written portion of the examination must be completed within two weeks.

A students’ Advisory Committee as a whole administers the Qualifying Examination. The Advisor coordinates the exam to insure that the student will answer at least one question from each member of the committee.

The oral portion of the examination should be held in the second week after the written portion is completed and normally lasts two hours. The oral examination, like the written, will cover the three fields of competence and will conform to the Statement of Purpose above.

Significant deviations from the established rules for the Qualifying Examination must be approved by the Graduate Committee.

The Qualifying exam is a departmental exam entirely and does not require representation from the Graduate School. The Student’s advisor serves as chair of the examination in all of its parts. Upon successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, the student becomes a Doctoral Candidate.

Results of the Qualifying Exam must be reported by the advisor to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will report the outcome to the Graduate School. Copies of the examination papers must be provided by the advisor to the graduate secretary, for inclusion in the student’s file.

E. Ph.D. Dissertation

The dissertation should be an original scholarly contribution to the field of geography. It has no prescribed length and may be highly varied in methodology, topic, and style of presentation. It is expected that a student will complete the dissertation during his/her fourth year of doctoral study.

F. Dissertation Defense

When the final draft of the dissertation has been approved by the advisor and its format has been approved by the Graduate School, a Dissertation Examination Committee is appointed and an oral defense scheduled. The Dissertation Examination Committee must include at least six members. As noted in Section V, above, the Dissertation Examination Committee includes the Advisor and the other members of the Advisory Committee. In addition, the Examination Committee must include a representative of the Graduate School (a regular faculty member from another department who serves as chair of the Examining Committee). The remaining members of the Examining Committee are usually, but not necessarily, Geography faculty. If a student and Advisor wish to include a non-SU (or ESF) faculty member, prior approval of the departmental faculty is required. (This requirement does not apply to former colleagues who are continuing members of the committee.) All six members of the Examining Committee vote on the dissertation and its defense. Although additional members (beyond the required six) may be added to the examining committee, under no circumstances may a majority of the examining committee be from outside the Geography Faculty.

The oral defense is a public examination, to which members of the University community are invited. The advisor will ensure that notice of the examination is posted at least 2 weeks in advance on the departmental listserv. The oral defense is usually two hours in length. While the exam will focus on the dissertation, examiners may ask questions concerning wider issues raised by the dissertation research. Results of the defense must be reported to the Graduate School and to the graduate secretary by the chair of the examination committee.
The defense is successful if the candidate obtains a simple majority of the voting members. Acceptance of the dissertation may be conditional upon the student adding to or modifying some of its parts. The advisor is responsible for ensuring that such conditions have been met before the dissertation is deposited in the Graduate School. Graduate School rules governing the dissertation defense are described in the document PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS DEFENDING THESES OR DISSERTATIONS, which can be downloaded from the Graduate School website at: http://www.syr.edu/gradschool/em/current_whatyouneed.html.

Each student completing the Ph.D. dissertation is considered at the time of their thesis/paper oral examination for the honor of graduating “with distinction.” This honor is reserved for students who demonstrate superior performances in both the oral examination and the dissertation. It requires a unanimous favorable vote from all members of the student’s examining committee. The result—if positive—is reported by the Examination Chair to the student, the Graduate Director and the Graduate School. The Graduate Director will inform the department when a student has earned this award.

Students should provide two copies of the dissertation to the Graduate School and individual copies to the Department (for the James Library) and the advisor. The student should offer to provide interested committee members with a paper or electronic copy, at their option.

G. Continuity of Study

Doctoral candidates must have their final dissertation draft approved within five years from the date of admission to candidacy, otherwise the candidate must apply for re-admission to the doctoral program and may be required to re-write the proposal and re-take the Qualifying exam.

H. Minimum Basic Requirements for Satisfactory Progress

For continued matriculation and consideration for any funding or financial aid, Ph.D. students in good standing are eligible for three years, post M.A. A Ph.D. student in good standing must: 1) have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better, 2) not have two or more Incompletes over two semesters, 3) have performed adequately in their Teaching Assistant or other Graduate Assistant assignments, and 4) not have earned any grade C in degree coursework, 5) by the beginning of their 2nd year must have a principal advisor. If no faculty member is willing to serve as a principal advisor, then the student must take a leave of absence until such time as there is agreement to advise. If a principal advisor is not secured within 2 years of the beginning of the leave of absence, then the student is required to withdraw from the program. Failure to meet any of these criteria shall constitute grounds for denial of funding. Such decisions are made on a case by case basis, and consideration is given to extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness or other personal problems). Students whose funding has been discontinued for reasons of performance may request reconsideration.

VIII. WRITING AND SCHEDULING

Scholarly writing demands careful use of language, and good writing takes time—lots of time. Logical organization, lucid writing, and coherent, professionally acceptable graphics are the responsibility of the candidate. Candidates are encouraged to read Joseph M. Williams, Style: Toward Clarity and Grace (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
The candidate should not depend upon the advisor as a co-author or copy editor. Although the
advisor will offer suggestions on wording, flow, and overall organization, the candidate should
present a carefully written manuscript requiring minimal editing. The candidate is also expected
to have run a spell-check to remove obvious spelling errors.

The Advisor-approved final draft of the dissertation must be distributed to the Examining
Committee at least two weeks before the defense (the student should not distribute draft until the
advisor has approved doing so). Because of other demands on the time of faculty, the Examining
Committee may, at its discretion, require a longer lead-time. Summertime defenses are
particularly difficult to schedule and the candidate should not be surprised if a defense during the
summer proves impossible.

IX GRADUATE CERTIFICATES IN SPECIAL STUDIES

En route to an M.A or Ph.D. degree, the student has the opportunity to obtain university
Certificates in a variety of special studies following the completion of a required number of
advanced courses (normally 12-15 hours). At the present time the university (not the department)
awards Certificates in the following fields:

• Conflict Resolution (PARC)
• Environmental Mediation (PARC)
• Gerontology (CPR)
• Information Studies and Telecommunications (IST)
• International Peace Studies (PARC)
• Latin American Studies (Maxwell)
• South Asian Studies (Maxwell)
• Women’s Studies (Arts and Sciences)

X DEPARTMENTAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The departmental office provides administrative and secretarial services to the faculty, and a
range of services to students. Basic supplies are available to students for the preparation of reports
that need to be distributed to the faculty or to classes. Students are provided with a personal code
to allow them to use the departmental photocopier. Students also have direct access to the
Maxwell and university computer network via departmental computers located in the graduate
student offices. In addition, a cluster of desktop computers is available for TA use (i.e., all
Maxwell TAs) in the TA area (Eggers Hall, ground floor). This cluster also provides access to
Maxwell network services. The network provides word-processing and statistical software.
Output may be printed free of charge on widely distributed laser printers. The Maxwell network
also permits access to the Library’s on-line catalog as well as a variety of other computer network
services. Use of the departmental FAX and long-distance telephone service requires the
permission of the Chair; this is usually given for purposes related to conferences, publications,
job searches and other similar purposes.

Listserve and Homepage: The department communicates among all its members via an electronic
listserv mailing list (GEO@listserv.syr.edu). Graduates should read their e-mail on a regular
basis since most departmental information is posted to the list rather than being circulated in
printed memoranda. The list welcomes all types of messages that relate to departmental and
geographical matters.
The department’s World Wide Web homepage can be found at http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/geo/, on which students will find information regarding the department’s programs, its faculty, staff, students, and courses. The page is updated regularly and graduate students are urged to provide the webmaster with pertinent personal material, both text and graphics, to enter on the graduate student page.

The Cartographic Laboratory presently has one staff cartographer whose principal duties are to prepare maps and graphics for faculty teaching and research and other needs. The staff cartographer is available to offer advice and technical assistance to graduate students, but is not permitted to prepare maps for students on university time. Students are urged to consult with the staff cartographer concerning any problems or questions that they might have regarding graphics. The staff cartographer and relevant faculty are prepared to organize short workshops related to text, tables, graphics and map preparation for use in theses and dissertations.

The department’s Preston E. James Library contains a variety of books and reference materials along with runs of the *Annals of the AAG*, *Economic Geography*, and the *Geographical Review*, as well as sets of geography M.A. theses, M.A. papers, doctoral dissertations, and the departmental Discussion Papers. Library materials may not normally be taken from the James Library.

Study and work space for graduate students is provided in a variety of graduate rooms within Eggers Hall. Priority for study space is generally given to Teaching Assistants, doctoral candidates, and students working on departmental and faculty projects. Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy may wish to work in study carrels, available upon application in Bird Library.

The department makes every effort to help students find professional positions as they near the completion of their graduate studies. Most commonly, the students’ advisors will assume the main responsibility for advice and help, but students should feel free to call upon others. Copies of letters and circulars describing open positions are kept on file (Job File) in the departmental office for all to use.
Appendix I

TRAVEL FUNDING GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

- A portion of the department’s annual travel budget is set aside each year in support of graduate student conference travel.
- A graduate student must be on the program as a participant at a conference in order to qualify for travel funding.
- Apart from the proviso above, it is up to the graduate students to decide each year how the available funds should be divided/allocated. This involves collective decision-making about issues such as whether all conferences are “equal” in terms of worthiness, whether a student may be reimbursed for more than one conference/year, etc. The graduate students should resolve these questions as early in the academic year as possible, to accommodate those who may wish to participate in conferences in the Fall.
- Reimbursement from departmental funds can be requested solely for (reasonable) expenses for air fare/ground transportation, conference registration fees, hotel costs, and food.

Appendix II

FUTURE PROFESSORIATE PROGRAM

The Geography Department is an active participant in the university-wide Future Professoriate Program (FPP), which is designed to prepare graduate students for the demands of an academic career.

The FPP is one part of the Professional Development Programs of the Graduate School, and includes three primary elements:
- The Teaching Associateship, a higher-level pre-doctoral appointment involving an independent teaching experience under the guidance of a Faculty Teaching Mentor
- A series of Faculty Teaching Mentors’ Seminars designed to assist faculty mentors in preparing graduate students for life in the academy
- The Certificate in University Teaching, a new form of recognition awarded jointly by the Graduate School and the academic departments to those teaching associates who, under the guidance of a faculty mentor, engage in an independent teaching experience and document their teaching credentials through the preparation of a teaching portfolio

Appendix III

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND STUDENT DISABILITY

Academic Integrity

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on
attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu

Students with Disabilities

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 304 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to course instructors and the Graduate Director, and review those accommodations with them within the first two weeks of each semester. Accommodations, such as exam administration or deadline extensions are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website: http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/
Appendix IV

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Annual Update for Graduate Students

The purpose of this document is to update the record of your program of study and other relevant professional activities prior to the annual review. Students may attach to this form copies of a curriculum vitae or any additional supporting documents or statements. This document (and any attachments) should be given to your advisor for signature and then distributed by you to your review committee at least 48 hours before the review occurs.

Name: _____________________________ Program: Ph.D. ______
        MA, thesis _____
Current semester: ____________________ MA, 2 papers ______
Faculty Advisor: _____________________
Advisory Committee Members:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Number of credits earned toward degree (do not count current semester): __________
Date thesis/dissertation proposal approved by advisor: ___________________________
Date Ph.D. comprehensive exam passed or scheduled: ___________________________
Anticipated date of thesis/dissertation defense: _________________________________
Thesis/Dissertation working title:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please attach a brief (~250-450 words) statement, outlining a) your research questions, b) how your research has progressed thus far, c) your timeline to completion, and d) concerns or questions you’d like your committee to consider.

Financial Aid:

Number of semesters of departmental support (include current): _________________
Current assignment: _________________________________________________________
Other support: _____________________________________________________________
Do you have funding for this Summer? _________________________________________

IF you are in the last year of a departmental funding commitment, do you anticipate needing further financial support next year?
**Current Coursework:**

List currently enrolled courses:

If you have any grades of “incomplete” on your record, list the course(s) and semester(s) they were taken, and state your progress toward removal, including the anticipated dates of completion.

**Professional Development:**

Briefly list your professional development since your last review (or since entering the program), using the following categories:

Publications (or plans for):

Presentations (or plans for):

Awards:

Teaching:

Conferences attended:

Professional memberships:

Professional and community service:

Other:

Student’s signature: __________________________ Date: __________

Advisor’s signature: __________________________ Date: __________