Western Michigan University’s Geography Department is the 2nd largest department of geography in Michigan, and ranked 9th among the 89 institutions in the United States that award M.A. thesis-based degrees in geography.

Concentrations are offered in:
- Community Development and Planning
- Environmental and Resource Analysis
- Geographic Techniques (mapping, spatial analysis & remote sensing)

Individualized programs are designed to suit career or personal objectives within a single concentration or by combining concentrations.

The department’s endowment funds enable us to provide funding to support graduate student thesis research and/or travel to professional meetings through a selective process.

Facilities include state-of-the-art hardware and software in six computer labs to support GIS, community and regional planning, remote sensing, physical geography and meteorology.

Programs prepare students for a variety of careers in both the public and private sectors. Our students are also competitive in top Ph.D. programs.
Geography (M.A.)

Teaching, Research, and Program Focus Areas
Research in the department emphasizes the application of geographic techniques to community planning and environmental problems at every scale. Much of our research is international and interdisciplinary in nature. Our M.A. students are encouraged to select thesis topics that cross disciplines and borders.

WMU has offered a Master of Arts degree in Geography since 1962. This program has produced a large number of graduates who have gone on to successful careers as academics, as well as planning, GIS, and environmental professionals.

A dual enrollment option, M.A. in Geography/Ph.D. in Science Education with an emphasis in physical geography is also available.

Admissions
Applicants who possess a bachelor’s degree with a major or minor in geography or a related academic discipline may apply for admission. Admission to the Department of Geography is continuous; however, it is preferable that students apply by Feb. 28 for assistantships, March 31 for fall semester, or September 30 for Spring semester.

After completing the WMU online application process, students should submit a purpose statement, three letters of references and Graduate Record Examination score directly to the department.

All required application materials are noted on the department website: www.wmich.edu/geography/

Graduate Assistantships/Associateships
Approximately 8-10 assistantships are awarded each fall through a process of competitive selection. Most assistants teach laboratory sections of physical geography, meteorology, or GISci courses, while some assist on research grants.

An assistantship provides a stipend and a tuition scholarship in return for 20 hours per week assisting in Department of Geography duties. Students are supported no more than two academic years. Applications should be submitted by Feb. 28 each year.

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Western Michigan University
One of the top-100 public universities in the United States, Western Michigan University offers many nationally known graduate programs, including 29 doctoral and 64 master’s degrees. More than 20 percent of its 25,000 students are enrolled in graduate course work.

Kalamazoo
With a population of more than 325,000, Kalamazoo is the sixth largest metropolitan area in Michigan and among the 150 largest in the country. Kalamazoo is rated one of the 25 best cities in the country for young college graduates, and is located midway between Chicago and Detroit.