

FAQ – GIS Certificate Program

How long does the program take?

Portland State University is on a quarter system. GIS classes are mainly offered fall, winter, and spring terms, and are 4 credits each. If you take 1-2 classes per term, the 20 credits could be completed in 3-5 terms.

Officially, students have up to 7 years to complete the Certificate program, although we do not recommend that timeframe. Students who do not enroll for 4 or more consecutive terms will be “deactivated” by the Office of Graduate Studies, and should submit a Re-enrollment form to be able to register.

http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/forms/Graduate_Re-enrollment_Form.pdf

How much does it cost?

Price per-credit varies, depending on resident or non-resident status. A tuition estimator can be found here: http://www.bao.pdx.edu/tuition_estimator/
There is a small lab fee for most of the GIS classes.

When can I start?

You can start any term except summer. At this time, the GIS program is on a rolling enrollment schedule. The application deadlines* are:

For admission to Fall Term:	May 1
For admission to Winter term:	October 1
For admission to Spring term:	January 15

*Note: the application deadlines have changed, as of September 2009.

What materials to I need to submit, and where send them too?

As of September 2009, we have a new protocol in submitting materials for the GIS certificate program. Two separate application packets are required:

Packet 1 to be sent to PSU Office of Admissions, Registration and Records (<http://www.pdx.edu/admissions/>):

- PSU’s Application for Graduate Certificate Program form.
- A complete set of official transcripts (unless your undergraduate degree was from PSU).

- **\$50 application fee (check or VISA/Mastercard)-- see PSU application form for details.**

Packet 2 to be sent to the Geography Department:

- **Geography Departmental application form**
- **Unofficial transcripts from every college or university attended, including junior colleges and community colleges.**
- **One page letter of interest/intent saying why you are you pursuing the GIS Certificate Program.**

Students who HAVE been admitted to a PSU Graduate Program will need to submit the following:

- **GO-19M for students in a PSU Master's Program.**
- **GO-19D for students in a PSU Doctoral Program.**

You can find the required forms at http://www.geog.pdx.edu/GIS/to_apply.php.

What if my undergraduate GPA was less than 3.0?

If your undergraduate GPA was 2.75 or better, you can be admitted conditionally.

More information can be found at: http://www.geog.pdx.edu/GIS/to_apply

Alternatively, one could apply for post-bac status at PSU. If you take 9 graduate credit hours with a 3.0 or better, that can be used in lieu of your undergraduate GPA. More information on post-bac enrollment can be found here:

<http://www.pdx.edu/admissions/postbaccalaureate-admission>

Do community college credits transfer to an equivalent course at PSU?

PCC courses GEO 265 and Geo 266 are equivalent to PSU's GEOG 380. If either one of these PCC courses are taken, 380 can be waived.

If I take GEOG 488 as an undergraduate, will it transfer as GEOG 588 when I am accepted into the GIS program?

No, only GEOG 588 (taken for graduate credit) can be used toward the Certificate program. 20 graduate credits are needed to complete the GIS Certificate program.

How long can I defer admission to the program once I have been accepted?

If you are admitted to the program, you can defer admission up to 3 terms. If you are already a graduate student you may defer up to 1 year. Use the Grad update form to defer

http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.admissions/files/media_assets/update-gr.pdf

I am thinking about taking GIS II in the winter, with the possibility of applying for the GIS Certificate later. What I need to do get registered for the winter class?

You'll need to do the quick-entry option, described below, in order to register for a single class (or up to 8 credits). Then, if you still wish to apply to the Certificate program, you must apply before the next deadline (e.g., January 15th for Spring term). Here is the quick-entry link: <http://www.pdx.edu/admissions/quick-entry-enrollment>

Note: quick-entry students are restricted to part-time, not-formally-admitted enrollment. Student services, student housing and course availability is more limited. Quick Entry students are not entitled to financial aid.

I want to obtain a Master's Degree with emphasis on GIS. Does the GIS Certificate program count toward this?

Yes, the Certificate credits can count toward a master's degree with certain restrictions. Up to 15 credits (1/3 of your total) can transfer from the Certificate and/or other institutions to your Master's Degree. Please note, however, the application processes for the Certificate and the Master's Degree are entirely separate. Just because you are accepted into the GIS Certificate does not guarantee acceptance into the Master's Program.

You might want to download our Grad Handbook (pdf) at <http://geog.pdx.edu/degrees/documentation/GeogGradInfo.pdf>

If I am enrolled in the GIS certificate program and decide to pursue my Master's Degree, how many credits from the certificate program will transfer into the Master's program?

45 credits are needed to receive a Master's degree. 15 credits (1/3 of your total graduate credits) can be transferred from the GIS certificate program.

What are my responsibilities to complete the GIS certificate program?

1) Take all the classes, and achieve a 'B' grade (3.0) or better.

2) Fill out the Application for Awarding Graduate Certificate

http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/forms/cert_application.pdf

****This must be done in the first week of the term in which you wish to graduate.**

Without completing this application, the Office of Graduate Studies does not know to process your program completion and award the Certificate. Your Certificate will be sent by mail, so make sure you put your current address on the form!

3) Fill out the "Program Completion - Student Checklist" in the Geography office

on online at http://www.geog.pdx.edu/GIS/GIS_COMPL_student_checklist.pdf

This is a backup alert for the Geography office to process your completion form once final grades are in.

For more information, the following link will take you to the PSU Office of Graduate Studies' website: <http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/contact.php>

What career opportunities are available for graduates of the GIS Certificate program?

We have many successful stories of our Certificate students. The GIS skills taught in our curricula are sufficient for many GIS positions. As you know, education is just one of the components of a successful career. The learning environment at PSU also offers many opportunities for students to prepare for a career in GIS. The page below contains information that might be useful:

http://www.psuasprs.groups.pdx.edu/colloquium/2007/CareerLinks_2007.htm

Additional Links:

The following links may be useful for answering questions about the GIS Certificate program.

Admissions/Grad

<http://www.pdx.edu/admissions/graduate.html>

Grad Update (to defer)

http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.admissions/files/media_assets/update-gr.pdf

Re-enrollment request form (return to certificate or grad program)
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/forms/Graduate_Re-enrollment_Form.pdf

Application for awarding graduate certificate
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/forms/cert_application.pdf

Add/Drop – Special Registration form
http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.admissions/files/media_assets/special_re_g.pdf

GIS Program Requirements
<http://www.geog.pdx.edu/GIS/courses.php>

GIS Application
http://www.geog.pdx.edu/GIS/to_apply.php

GIS Application to Graduate
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/application_cert.phpp

GIS (Dept-student graduation checklist)
http://geog.pdx.edu/GIS/documentation/GIS_COMPL_student_checklist.pdf

GIS / Techniques Course Planning 2009-2010
http://web.pdx.edu/~jduh/courses/faq/GIS_Certificate_Courses.pdf

GIS Orientation Page
http://www.geog.pdx.edu/GIS/GIS_Orientation.htm

GIS – GO-11GC/Transfer credit form
<http://geogres.pdx.edu/GIS/documentation/GO11GCProposed.pdf>

GO-7 form
<http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/forms/go-7.pdf>

GIS Completion form-student
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/forms/cert_application.pdf

All Grad forms
http://www.gsr.pdx.edu/ogs_forms.php

Geog Faculty
<http://www.geog.pdx.edu/faculty/faculty.php>

GEOG Grad Handbook
<http://geog.pdx.edu/degrees/documentation/GeogGradInfo.pdf>

Financial Aid

<http://www.pdx.edu/finaid/>