

# New Geosciences Grad Student Orientation Fall 2018

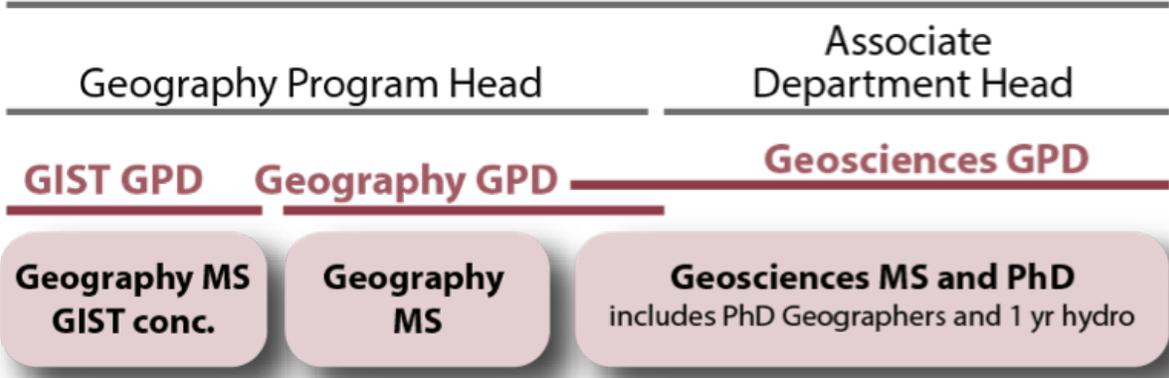
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Welcome!

There are many things to do and learn as you start your new graduate career here at UMass, and keeping it all straight can seem overwhelming. The following is a guide to help you get started. We've put together information you'll need as a member of this department, as well as some pointers on entering life as a graduate student at UMass. So relax, take a deep breath, and ask us lots of questions!

- Geosciences / Geography grad program directors (GPDs)

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|--|--|
- \* not geographers



## 1. Who is in charge?

Department Head:  
Julie Brigham-Grette



Geography Program Head:  
Piper Gaubatz



Associate Department Head:  
Steve Petsch



GIST MS program director:  
Forrest Bowlick



Geography program director:  
Eve Vogel



Geosciences program director:  
Michele Cooke



1yr Hydro MS program head: David Boutt



## 2. OIT and your NetID

[www.oit.umass.edu/accounts](http://www.oit.umass.edu/accounts)

Each student is assigned an OIT account and NetID [OIT = Office of Information Technologies, UMass's central i.t. services office]. This was sent to the email address you listed with your application. You need this NetID and password to access SPIRE, UMass wifi, UMail (the UMass email system), etc.

## 3. SPIRE

[www.spire.umass.edu](http://www.spire.umass.edu)

SPIRE is the web-based student information system. You use SPIRE to locate and register for courses, to review your course history and unofficial transcript, and to manage University finances, bills and fees. You use your NetID and password to log in to SPIRE. Note that the first 10 business days of the semester are an "Add/Drop" period. You do not need to settle on your semester course schedule and registration until the end of the Add/Drop period. This allows you to change, add and/or drop classes, to set up independent studies or thesis/dissertation/research credits, or go on continuous registration (also known as program fee) once your course/credit requirements are completed.

#### 4. UCard

[www.umass.edu/ucard](http://www.umass.edu/ucard)

UCard is the official UMass photo-identification card. You need this for access to certain buildings, offices, and services on campus. Visit the UCard web page for instructions how to get your grad student UCard.

#### 5. Parking

[parking.umass.edu](http://parking.umass.edu)

The UMass parking office issues permits for parking on campus. Lots that are available to graduate students are typically the Yellow and Green Lots. Visit the UMass Parking website to apply for a parking permit.

#### 6. Public Transit (PVTA)

[www.pvta.com](http://www.pvta.com)

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) operates buses and shuttle vans in Amherst and surrounding towns of the Pioneer Valley. This is an excellent way to get around and to/from campus. Most buses around campus and the Five Colleges are free; the B43 to Northampton and other longer-range buses are free UMass students during the school year for, with a UCard ID.

#### 7. Campus WiFi

[www.oit.umass.edu/wireless](http://www.oit.umass.edu/wireless)

UMass uses EduRoam, a world-wide roaming access service, to provide wireless coverage across the entire campus. To access campus WiFi, you will need to run the XpressConnect setup wizard on your computer, tablet and smartphone. You will need your NetID and password; follow the instructions on the OIT wireless web page. If you have trouble, the UMass OIT User Services office is very helpful! <https://www.umass.edu/it/support-center>, A109 Lederle, 545-9400.

#### 8. Laboratory Safety Training

[www.ehs.umass.edu/trainings](http://www.ehs.umass.edu/trainings)

Anyone working in an identified laboratory space or with any hazardous materials in the field must first complete an in-person Lab and Fire Safety Training session. Visit the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Trainings website to register for a training session.

Each year, you must renew this safety training through the EH&S OWL trainings on Lab Safety, Hazardous Waste Management, and Right-to-Know law. Visit the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) OWL online training website to login and register for these online training seminars.



Jeff Salacup (in photo) is our EH&S coordinator. He reminds and advises us on staying compliant with EH&S regulations.

9. **Geosciences Grad Program web page** [www.geo.umass.edu/programs/graduate](http://www.geo.umass.edu/programs/graduate)  
**Geography Grad Program web page** <https://blogs.umass.edu/umgeog/graduate-program/>

The Geosciences department and Geography program maintain graduate program web pages that provide descriptions of their respective graduate programs. Importantly, you can also find PDFs of the Geosciences MS and PhD students manuals, and the Geography MS student manual. These manuals are your best guide and resource for the timeline, steps and requirements for your graduate degree. The manuals also include a number of departmental forms that must be completed, signed and returned to the graduate program director as you complete various degree requirements. Please pay attention to deadlines and timelines in this manual; satisfactory progress towards your degree depends in part on completing these requirements in a timely fashion.

Also on the Geosciences graduate program web page is a governance document describing our department’s procedures for appointment and reappointment of assistantships in the MS and PhD programs (in other words, TAs and RAs).

**10. Moodle page for Geosciences MS and PhD students**

This moodle page is chock full of useful information. The latest versions of graduate handbooks for Geosciences MS and PhD students can be found here as well as links to useful resources about grants, academic culture, teaching and even getting job. The Geosciences program director also uses this page to notify students of deadlines and collect information from students.

All Geosciences MS and PhD students have access to this moodle page.



Welcome to the Geosciences graduate student Moodle page of resources to help you thrive during your graduate students in Geosciences at UMass.

[Announcements](#)

▼ Open all ▶ Close all

▶ Handbooks, Procedures, Guidebooks etc

▶ Fellowships

▶ Grants

▶ Culture of Academia

▶ Teaching resources

▶ Science Communication

▶ Some ways to make broader impacts

▶ Getting a job

▶ Tools

## **11. MS and PhD Geosciences student progress reports**

MS and PhD students in Geosciences have BOX folders shared with the Geosciences graduate program director. The GPD updates your folders on the first of each month with official notices, such as your welcome letter, and a text file that records the forms that you've turned in and your progress towards your degree.

## **12. The Graduate School website**

[www.umass.edu/gradschool](http://www.umass.edu/gradschool)

The UMass Graduate School website provides important detailed information about policies, forms and other information. In particular, the page "Forms for Graduate Students" (<http://www.umass.edu/gradschool/policies-forms/forms-graduate-students>) lists several forms you will need to complete and have signed as you achieve various benchmarks towards your degree. Additionally, the "Graduate Student Handbook" page on the grad school site (<http://www.umass.edu/gradschool/policies-forms/graduate-student-handbook>) describes the policies and forms you will need for (1) enrollment, (2) educational records, and (3) degree certification.

## **13. Geosciences Department Vans and OWL Motor Vehicle Idling Policy**

[www.ehs.umass.edu/owl-online-training](http://www.ehs.umass.edu/owl-online-training)

To be authorized to drive a UMass-operated vehicle (e.g. the department vans), you must be a university employee and complete the online Motor Vehicle Idling Policy training seminar. Visit the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) OWL online training website to login and register for this seminar.

Van use is restricted to course-related activities, and if available and with dept. head permission, research activities and travel to conferences. If you anticipate driving a department van, contact John Sweeney (Departmental Technician, room 128 Morrill) to get instructions on van use and driving tips.

All van use must be reserved in advance with staff in the Geosciences office. All van use must be logged, with miles recorded at the start and end of each use. Vans must be cleaned of interior trash and debris after each use. Vans must be returned to Geosciences parking with Full gas tanks. Failure to return the vans in clean condition and with full gas tanks may result in restrictions on future van use and TA positions.

## **14. @geo.umass.edu email addresses**

Each Geo student is expected to obtain and use a NetID@geo.umass.edu email address. You may request a geo email account by completing the Request form for a Geoscience Computer Account at: <http://bcrc.bio.umass.edu/content/request-form-computer-account-geosciences>

See instructions at [Graduate Student Information](#) >> [Computing & Network Resources](#) for other network services.

You will receive all official departmental email at your @geo.umass.edu address; thus, you are expected to regularly check this account, have this email automatically forwarded to another account, or better yet, use your @geo.umass.edu address as your main account. You will receive official university email at your Net ID @umass.edu address; it is a good idea to set this @umass.edu to automatically forward to your @geo.umass.edu account. Go to “UMail Post Office” to manage your UMail account and set up forwarding. Note that your @geo.umass.edu is intended for professional student use.

We have the following automatic mailing lists within our @geo.umass.edu system. Each of these deliver to all @geo.umass.edu addresses in the relevant group.

- ❖ geoall@geo.umass.edu - goes to everyone with an @geo.umass.edu account, including faculty, staff, postdocs, graduate students and undergrads. This is a good list for making department-wide announcements.
- ❖ faculty@geo.umass.edu - goes to all geosciences faculty members
- ❖ geolfac@geo.umass.edu - goes only to geology faculty in the department
- ❖ geogfac@geo.umass.edu - goes only to geography faculty in the department
- ❖ post-doc@geo.umass.edu - goes to department post-docs
- ❖ grads@geo.umass.edu - goes only to graduate students in the department
- ❖ geoggrads@geo.umass.edu - goes only to geography graduate students
- ❖ majors@geo.umass.edu - goes to all undergraduate majors
- ❖ ggmajors@geo.umass.edu - goes to all undergraduate Geography majors
- ❖ Do not attach large files to emails to any of these mailing lists, as this sends copies of your attachment to each recipient’s inbox and uses a lot of server space.

## **15. Keys for Geo offices and labs**

You must request a key for grad student offices and department classrooms (together known as the “Grad Key”) and any labs that you are authorized to work in. You can request keys by submitting a completed Key Request Form to the Geosciences Business Manager in room 233 Morrill. It may take several weeks for UMass Physical Plant to complete your request and cut your new keys; the business manager will contact you when your keys are ready with instructions how to get them.

## **16. Printing and photocopies**

Most printers in the department are associated with faculty offices and research labs. There is one printer in 254 called graphite that is for general departmental use. To connect your computer to this printer, you will need to have a geo.umass.edu account on our server

(eclogite), and set up your computer to access the network printer. Detailed instructions can be found on the Geosciences department website under [Graduate Student Information](#) >> [Computing & Network Resources](#).

There are two photocopiers available for use in the department. One is in room 254, and the other is in the Geosciences Department Office (233 Morrill). To use these photocopiers, you will need to enter a 4-digit authorization code. While individual graduate students are not typically given a code, faculty and courses are. So if you are photocopying something associated with research with a faculty member, obtain her/his photocopier code. And if you are photocopying something associated with teaching responsibilities, ask the course instructor for a code. If you are stuck, the front office staff can help you. Note that the same codes work on both photocopiers. Also note we are responsible for simple maintenance on these machines. If your copying job depletes the paper reserve, fill the tray for the next person. Likewise, if you see a “low-toner” message, promptly tell one of the front office staff so that a new toner cartridge is put in.

### 17. Geosciences Office Staff

We have four full-time staff members in the Geosciences Department Office in room 233 Morrill. Each has their own specific responsibilities, but any of them can tell you the right person to ask with your question, concern or issue. These staff are great resources that really make the whole department run as smoothly as possible. Get to know them well. They are there to help us, but remember that your lack of planning does not make an automatic emergency on their part!

Staff include (with some of their responsibilities that impact graduate students):

unfilled  
*business manager*  
(course and room  
scheduling, TA & RA  
appointments)

Eugenie Harvey  
*department head  
assistant* (TA & RA  
appointments)

Linda Moore  
*accountant*  
(purchases, visitor  
parking)

Chris Stanavage  
*office assistant*  
(travel authorization  
and reimbursement,  
office supplies)



receptionists – department secretary (vans, photocopiers, timesheets, mail)

## 18. Geo Graduate Student mailboxes

You will have a mailbox slot in the Grad Student mail center in room 254. Department and university announcements will make up much of your mail. You will receive internal (university-related mail) if you supply the following address:

Your Name  
Department of Geosciences  
233 Morrill Science Center

To receive outside mail at your Geosciences mail box, use the following mailing address:

Your Name  
Department of Geosciences  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
627 N. Pleasant St.  
Amherst, MA 01003-9354

## 19. Professional Seminar and the Graduate Lecture Series (optional for geographers)

Fridays in the Dept of Geosciences are days of talks and seminars! At 12:20-1:10 each Friday, we hold our Professional Seminar, informally called ProSem. ProSem is our internal seminar series. It is an opportunity for members of our departmental community (grad students, post-docs, sometimes faculty, friends or undergraduates) to give a talk about their research. This is a great way to practice a talk for an upcoming meeting, or just to try out some new ideas or interpretation of new data. There is no set format, but the presentations are typically expected to be research talks. ProSem is also a time when announcements of upcoming events and activities are made to the entire department.

ProSem is required for Geosciences graduate students, and optional for geographers. There are three requirements for MS and PhD Geosciences graduate students regarding ProSem. One is that for each semester you are enrolled in classes, you are required to enroll in Geosci701, the one-credit Professional Seminar course; registering for ProSem is one way you will earn credits at the 600-800 level. Second, if you are registered for ProSem you are expected to attend each week. The Geosci701 course is graded pass/fail, and failure to regularly attend ProSem may result in a failing grade for the semester; if you know you are going to miss a week's ProSem due to another obligation, please let the graduate program director know in advance. Third, you are expected to deliver a ProSem presentation as a degree requirement in both the MS and PhD programs, unless you provide the graduate program director notice that you have delivered a talk at an off-campus meeting or conference. Even if you do give a talk at a meeting, it is still great to give a ProSem and let the rest of the department know about the research you are doing.

Fridays at 3:30-4:30 is our Graduate Lecture Series, our external lecture series. Although not held every week, these are the department-wide lectures where researchers from other

institutions are invited to present their research. This is a graduate student-led seminar series; graduate students handle the invitations, travel, and announcements for the seminars. The GLS is a great way to hear about other people's research and to show a bit of our departmental face to the rest of the world. All Geosciences MS and PhD graduate students are expected to attend each GLS. Geographers are encouraged to attend. Geography faculty will often send special notification when speakers are geographers or are giving a talk particularly relevant to geographers. Geography MS students should leave this time open during their weekly schedule so they may attend relevant lectures.

## **20. Informal Geosciences Graduate Student Manual**

This google document provides lots of tips on settling into the Happy Valley and the Geosciences department. It is a live document updated with input from all Geo graduate students.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wYjt45vER6olA069dRL2B5jSWjpZkkl5oq7Fu6SZ4Ys/edit>