

**College/School/Department: GEOGRAPHY**  
**Academic Plan 2017-2023**  
**Mid-Cycle Review**

**I. Introduction**

**State your department/school/college mission statement.**

The mission of the Department of Geography is to provide its students with educational experiences of the highest quality, to conduct vital research that benefits society, and to serve our communities, from the local to the international. We are committed to outstanding teaching and scholarly activities within the framework of academic freedom, the diversity of people and ideas, a spirit of inclusiveness, and a global perspective.

**Outline briefly your “vision” for the 2017-2023 planning cycle.**

The Department of Geography will continue to stress both the theoretical and applied realms in all of our degree programs. We will provide a rigorous educational experience through innovative teaching, engagement with the community, and dedication to our students and alumni. We will increase our visibility as a research department through faculty scholarship, research grant activities, international collaborations, the recruiting of top students for our degree programs, the organization of national and international conference and symposia, a robust program of scholarly exchanges, and service in academic and professional organizations.

**Using University goals and initiatives as a guide, list and briefly describe your top five priorities for the 2017-2023 planning cycle and indicate the university goal/initiative to which the unit’s goal is linked.**

The top priorities for the Department of Geography for the 2017-2023 planning cycle are as follows:

1. Sustain conferring 6-8 PhD degrees per year (in place), and maintain healthy student enrollments and graduation rates in all our degree programs by incorporating innovative educational delivery methods, updating the curricula and degree plans, developing new programs, and exploring new marketing strategies to reflect our department strengths;
2. Acquire six new tenure-track or tenured faculty lines and one Senior Lecturer in order to maintain our program’s growth and continue on the path of increasing research productivity;
3. Pursue external funding through strategic hiring (including at the Associate and Full Professor levels), faculty development, and the

support of existing departmental centers;

4. Contribute to internationalization by expanding partnerships with institutions outside the U.S., continuing to recruit internationally for our graduate programs, and hiring faculty with international roots and global research agendas and interests;
5. Continue and strengthen our commitment to academic freedom, the diversity of people and ideas, engagement with the community, and a spirit of service to our students, our academic and professional organizations, and to society.

**Based on unit goals, list the number of new (not replacement) faculty lines you plan to request in the 2017-2018 academic year and in the remaining 2-6 years.**

The Department of Geography requests the following additional faculty lines:

- a) Senior Lecturer in Geography with experience and a strong record in developing online and distance education
- b) Tenure-track at the Assistant Professor level or tenure-track/tenured at the Associate or Full Professor level in:
  - a. Geographic Information Science with great potential for securing external funding and developing interdisciplinary collaboration;
  - b. Geospatial Humanities with research interests in Human Geography (preferably Historical Geography);
  - c. Health Geography with great potential for securing external funding and developing interdisciplinary collaboration;
  - d. Environmental geography with research interests in Water Resources, Environmental Management, Environmental Hazards, Latin American/Border Issues, Conservation, and/or Natural Resource Use;
  - e. Climate Change Science with research interests in water resources and/or urban studies
  - f. Urban studies with research interests in any of the above fields.

**Based on unit initiatives outlined in your plan, estimate the total amount of new funding that your unit will realistically need in the 2017-2018 academic year and in the remaining 2-6 years.**

Over the course of the planning cycle, the Department of Geography will request the following funding:

- 2017-2018 (and annually afterward): a) one Senior Lecturer (\$50,000) and one Grant Program Staff (\$46,473);
- Remaining 2-6 years (and annually afterward): a) tenure-track or tenured faculty lines at the Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor levels (\$404,500 to \$578,796 depending on rank);
- Remaining 2-6 years (one time only): a) \$50,000 to \$100,000 for new teaching and research labs; b) \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 for GIS and Health Geography from external endowment; c) \$700,000 for an estimated five-year cost and funding to support the development of online and hybrid programs and courses.

**State the facilities (e.g. offices, research and lab space, classrooms) that will be required for anticipated growth and new unit goals.**

The Department of Geography requests four additional lab resources:

1. One additional computer teaching lab for GIScience and upper level environmental studies courses (minimum of 20 workstations);
2. Redesign and modernization of existing physical geography and geology teaching labs;
3. Creation of the Innovation and Exploration Lab (IEL) for online teaching, classroom teaching, and faculty/student research;
4. One Urban Studies lab for teaching, faculty/student research, and community engagement and involvement;
5. One new research lab for physical and environmental geography to meet research needs of the faculty and master's and PhD students.

## **II. Process**

**Describe, in a brief paragraph, the process used to develop your plan, including the nature and extent of faculty involvement.**

This strategic plan was developed with extensive input from the faculty of the Department of Geography. Half-day retreats were organized on April 22, 2016 and September 16, 2016. After brief introductions by the Chair and Associate Chair, faculty members were divided in small groups and asked to discuss future directions (2017-2023) for the department and to report back to the full assembly.

The content of this Strategic Plan, which was approved at the January 27, 2017 faculty meeting, reflect the outcome of the retreats.

As we move into the mid-term of the 2017-23 planning period, faculty of the Department of Geography have been revisiting the Strategic Plan through broad and continuous discussions and meetings, including two strategic planning meetings on February 15, 2019 and August 23, 2019. The content of this Strategic Plan (Mid-Cycle Revision) reflects the outcomes from these discussions and meetings.

**College/School/Department: GEOGRAPHY  
Academic Plan 2017-2023**

**III. Program Maintenance**

<b>Maintenance Need</b>	<b>Reason for Need</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Result of Funding</b>
<p>Regular curricula revision, developing new courses and degree programs, and revising the existing courses and programs, including online /hybrid delivery. Emphases will be on developing environment and resource studies programs, and online/ hybrid delivery of Geographic Education curricular.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Geography as a discipline has been going through noticeable changes in the recent 10 years as the different sub-fields flourish or shrink;</li> <li>- Our courses and programs must respond to the development of the discipline and the dynamics of the job market;</li> <li>- These actions will allow the Department to stay competitive when it comes to attract outstanding faculty and great students.</li> </ul>	<p>Estimated five-year cost for developing, promoting, and recruiting for the online programs: ~ \$700,000</p>	<p>Success of the related courses and programs will contribute to University Goal 1 &amp; 2.</p> <p>This will allow us to meet the University’s call for more hybrid/online education and programs. Online courses and programs will also increase accessibility to students with disabilities and bring us closer to ADA compliance.</p>
<p>Innovative and effective marketing strategies to reflect departmental strength, including revision of course and degree names, and exploration of a different department name.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The recent years have seen a nationwide trend of name-change involving many well-recognized Geography departments and related degrees / programs;</li> <li>- Some core strengths of our Department appear to be under-represented to the university communities and the public, partially due to the widely assumed while inaccurately understood meaning of some course names and the name of the Department.</li> </ul>	<p>Estimated cost of around \$10,000.</p>	<p>Effective marketing strategies applied to courses, programs, and department name will give the department an edge in better connecting with the university communities and the public, recruiting students, promoting our students’ educational experience for job market, and expanding the opportunities for the department through the various community outreach efforts.</p> <p>Success in these efforts will contribute to University Goals 1 &amp; 2.</p>
<p>Senior Lecturer in Geography with experience and a strong record in developing online and distance education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are beginning to offer more hybrid/online courses and programs, but most current faculty are not yet fully prepared to teach online courses.</li> <li>- Despite that the newly developed online /hybrid courses and programs may replace some of the existing ones, developing and offering these courses create additional work; the current faculty are fully loaded to cover the existing courses during the transitional period.</li> <li>- The new online and hybrid programs create needs for a designated program coordinator who carries a faculty role by teaching online courses, and perform service and administrative duties through managing the online programs.</li> </ul>	<p>New Senior Lecturer: \$50,000</p>	<p>This will allow us to meet the University’s call for more hybrid/online education and programs. Online courses and programs will also increase accessibility to students with disabilities and bring us closer to ADA compliance. New online courses and programs are expected to increase enrollment by allowing students with conflicting work schedules to earn a college degree. Success of the online courses and programs will contribute to University Goal 1 &amp; 2.</p>

<p>Geographic Information Science with great potential for securing external funding and developing interdisciplinary collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We offer GIScience courses in a wide spectrum of subfields, including GIS, Remote Sensing (including LIDAR), Cartography, GPS, Drone etc. These courses are offered from undergraduate to master’s to PhD levels.</li> <li>- All of our degree programs require the students taking some GIS course(s).</li> <li>- GIScience and technologies is incorporated in most geographical studies and researches, and GIScientists commonly collaborate with geographers and non-geographers from a great variety of backgrounds and research fields.</li> <li>- GIScientists and their applied research tend to fit into the funding scopes of many agencies and foundations.</li> <li>- Potential partnerships with the Environmental Engineering and Civil Engineering programs</li> </ul>	<p>New tenure/track Assistant Professor: \$68,000</p> <p><b>OR:</b>  <u>Senior positions:</u>                  Professor: \$96,466 (min)                  Associate Professor: \$78,560 (min)</p>	<p>This position will allow us to hire a faculty with expertise in the broadly defined Geographic Information Science yet very flexible applied field within geography that can compliment the Department’s strengths. Emphasizing grant and collaboration potential and /or records will ensure this hire can help bring the Department to a higher level in terms of research funding and scientific /intellectual impact. Hiring at the Senior Level will increase grant activities and increase the visibility of the Department of Geography domestically and internationally, thus contributing to University Goal 3.</p>
<p>Geospatial Humanities with research interests in Human Geography (preferably Historical Geography)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emerging trend in national/international interdisciplinary research, with international funding opportunities available</li> <li>- Benefits our recruiting and internationalization efforts</li> <li>- Will benefit the PhD in Geography program, increasing recruiting and visibility</li> </ul>	<p>New tenure/track Assistant Professor: 64,500.</p>	<p>This will bring the department at the forefront of contemporary trends in academic research and contribute to elevating the visibility of Texas State Geography’s research profile domestically and internationally. It will also help recruiting doctoral students, especially domestically, and increase funding opportunities both internationally and domestically with agencies (e.g., NEH) we traditionally do not pursue.</p>
<p>Health Geography with great potential for securing external funding and developing interdisciplinary collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emerging trend in geography research, with considerable research funding opportunities available</li> <li>- Contributes to current research initiatives at Texas State University (e.g., the Translational Health Research Initiative)</li> <li>- Prepares our students for growing job market; increased recruiting opportunities at the PhD level</li> <li>- Leverages and enhances our current faculty interests</li> </ul>	<p>New tenure/track Assistant Professor: \$68,000</p> <p><b>OR:</b>  <u>Senior positions:</u>                  Professor: \$96,466 (min)                  Associate Professor: \$78,560 (min)</p>	<p>This will considerably enhance our chances of external funding in a field where research funding opportunities are substantial. It will also allow for an increase in the mentoring of Master’s and doctoral students and also fit within key research initiative at Texas State. Targeted hiring at the Senior Level will increase grant activities (e.g., with the NIH) and the visibility of the Department of Geography domestically and internationally, thus contributing to University Goal 3.</p>
<p>Environmental Geography with research interests in Water Resources, Environmental Management, Environmental Hazards, Latin American/Border Issues, Conservation, or Natural Resource Use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Growth in Water Resources and continuing partnership with the Meadows Center</li> <li>- Climate change and adaptation strategies likely to increase need for hazard management, natural resource use, and environmental management</li> <li>- Conservation is one of the top job growth areas and we have a greater demand from our students</li> <li>- Latin American/Border issues leverages our tradition, complements our new hires, and fits with the HSI designation of our university</li> </ul>	<p>New tenure/track Assistant Professor: \$68,000</p> <p><b>OR:</b>  <u>Senior positions:</u>                  Professor: \$96,466 (min)                  Associate Professor: \$78,560 (min)</p>	<p>This will allow us to respond to the teaching needs in environmental geography courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. It will also respond to forecasted employment growth in the fields of interest, both at the state and at the national and international levels, as well as increase mentoring choices for Master’s and doctoral students. Hiring at the Senior Level will increase grant activities and increase the visibility of the Department of Geography domestically and internationally, thus contributing to University Goal 3.</p>

<p>Climate Change Science with research interests in water resources, natural resource use, and/or urban studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are experiencing increased interest and demand from students (both from the Department of Geography and from other programs) for courses on climate change</li> <li>- Considerable research funding is available domestically and internationally for this field</li> <li>- Likely to be an employment growth area, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels</li> <li>- The focus on water resources, natural resource use, and urban studies complement our existing strengths in these areas</li> </ul>	<p>New tenure/track Assistant Professor: \$68,000</p> <p>OR:</p> <p>Senior positions: Professor: \$96,466 (min) Associate Professor: \$78,560 (min)</p>	<p>This will allow for an increase in the number of offerings of meteorology and climate change courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and also increase our contribution to General Education. It will also respond to forecasted employment growth in the fields of interest, both at the state and at the national and international levels, as well as increase mentoring choices for Master's and doctoral students in the face of increased interest in the topics.</p> <p>Hiring at the Senior Level will increase grant activities and increase the reputation and visibility of the Department of Geography domestically and internationally, thus contributing to University Goal 3.</p>
<p>Urban studies with research interests in any of the above fields</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This hire will fill the teaching needs of our Urban and Regional Planning B.S. program;</li> <li>- It will allow us to provide the much needed support and advising to our master's and PhD students; This field of study will likely attract new research funding in the future;</li> <li>- This hire may also contribute to the creation of an Urban Studies Interdisciplinary Major or Minor.</li> <li>- This hire will contribute to the potential partnership with Civil Engineering.</li> </ul>	<p>New tenure/track Assistant Professor: \$68,000</p>	<p>This hire will leverage existing faculty strength, and respond to the needs of our Urban and Regional Planning program needs. It will also enhance our curricular offerings and create new employment opportunities for our students. Finally, it will help recruiting graduate students, especially doctoral students, and increase funding opportunities both internationally and domestically.</p>
<p>Grant Program Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support our pre- and post-award grant activities</li> <li>- Especially crucial for Geography Education as support to the Texas Alliance for Geography Education (TAGE), the Grosvenor Center, and the National Center for Research in Geography Education. All three depend heavily on external grants and will do so more in the future</li> <li>- Support our online media presence to help with student recruiting and community outreach</li> </ul>	<p>Staff: \$3,873/monthly or \$46,473 annually</p>	<p>The department is building a world-level cluster of research centers and activities in the Geography Education field at the state (TAGE), national (Grosvenor Center), and international (NCRGE) levels. The number of grants acquired has substantially increased in the last several years, culminating in the Research Coordination Network designation of the NCRGE by the NSF, and is likely to increase in the future. In addition, this new staff member will help manage our online presence, community outreach, and student recruiting.</p>

**College/School/Department: GEOGRAPHY  
Academic Plan 2017-2023**

**IV. Planning Goals (University Goal Statements)**

Dept.	Unit Goal	1 yr	2-6 years	New Resources Required	Cost	Source of Resources	Assessment Criteria	University Initiative
	<b>University Goal 1: Promote the success of all students.</b>							
GEO 1.1	Increase student scholarship support; institutional and charitable giving	X	X	None	None	Individual and corporate sponsor	Increased donor contributions	1.1; 1.4
GEO 1.2	Increase number and scope of international partnerships	X	X	None	None	\$2,000/year max	Partnerships developed; research collaborations established; active student and faculty exchanges	1.1; 1.7
GEO 1.3	Maintain support for the Institute for Government Innovation in support of external funding goals and student workforce preparation	X	X	None	Director salary	Provost	External funding and student support	1.6; 1.8
GEO 1.4	Maintain support for the Texas Alliance for Geographic Education in support of diversity, student recruiting, community outreach, and geographic education	X	X	Staff	See Part III	Provost	Grant activity and engagement with teachers	1.1; 1.4
GEO 1.5	Maintain and increase service learning, workforce training, and community outreach through undergraduate/graduate curriculum, partnership outreach, and website development	X	X	None	None	Faculty and staff time	Community engagement and curriculum enhancement	1.7; 1.8
GEO 1.6	Maintain and enhance study abroad programs and field based courses/experiences	X	X	Initial startup	Faculty time	Department	Student participation in existing and new programs	1.1; 1.7



Academic Plan - 9

GEO 1.7	Hire a Senior Lecturer for online and hybrid courses.	X	X	Faculty line	See Part III	Provost	Number of non-tenure track lines	1.3; 1.5
GEO 1.8	Exploring effective marketing strategies to promote the different courses, programs, and the Department		X	Faculty line	See Part III	Provost	Student enrollment	1.1, 1.2

Academic Plan -

	<b>University Goal 2: Offer high quality academic and educational programming.</b>							
GEO 2.1	Maintain and enhance student, faculty, and community diversity initiatives	X	X	None	None	Faculty and staff time	Increased faculty, staff and student diversity	2.2
GEO 2.2	Pursue undergraduate and/or graduate concentrations in concentrations such as Latin American Studies, Border Studies, GIS and Health Geography, Resource and the Environment, and Urban Studies	X	X	Faculty lines	See Part III	Provost; Department; faculty and staff time	Number of programs	2.1; 2.6
GEO 2.3	Maintain support for the interdisciplinary Master's Program in Sustainability	X	X	None	None	Faculty time	Student completion numbers and employment opportunities	2.2
GEO 2.4	Maintain and expand curriculum and research collaborations with other departments on campus (e.g., Engineering, Computer Science, Business, Health Administration, Anthropology, International Studies, Honor College)	X	X	None	None	Faculty and staff time	New interdisciplinary programs	2.1; 2.2
GEO 2.5	Expand and enhance undergraduate and graduate online education	X	X	None	None	Faculty and staff time	Online curriculum offerings	2.1; 2.2; 2.7
GEO 2.6	Pursue external and internal financial support for Teaching Innovation and Exploration Lab	X	X	Software and hardware	\$25,000-50,000	Provost; department; external funding	Lab implemented and active	2.4
GEO 2.7	Develop and implement new teaching/research labs in GIScience, physical and environmental geography and/or urban studies	X	X	Software and hardware	To be determined (average of \$25,000 per lab)	Provost; department; external funding	Labs implemented and active	2.4; 2.5

Academic Plan -

	<b>University Goal 3: Achieve significant progress in research and creative activity as measured by national standards.</b>							
GEO 3.1	Host, (co-)sponsor, and pursue institutional and external funding in support of national/international conferences in geography and related fields	X	X	Sponsorships	\$5,000 to \$20,000 per conference	Department and university; external funding from research agencies and other donors	Conferences completed; department reputation	3.1; 3.3
GEO 3.2	Pursue endowed professorship/center in GIS and Health Geography	X	X	New endowments	\$1,000,000 (professorship) to \$2,000,000 (center)	External donors	Establishment of endowment	3.1; 3.3
GEO 3.3	Maintain, and pursue additional, support for the National Center for Research in Geography Education (NCRGE)	X	X	None	None	Department; faculty and staff time	Grant activities; national and international leadership in Geography Education	3.1; 3.3
GEO 3.4	Maintain, and pursue additional, support for the activities of the Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education	X	X	None	None	Department; faculty and staff time	Grant activities; national and international leadership in Geography Education	3.1; 3.3
GEO 3.5	Maintain and enhance partnership with the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment	X	X	None	None	Faculty time	Increased partnership and grant activities	3.1; 3.3
GEO 3.6	Pursue and develop new mission objectives for the Lovell Center and the Texas GIScience Center	X	X	None	None	Faculty time	New mission, new leadership, revised focus, new activities	3.1
GEO 3.7	Support the creation of a Humanities Research Center in the College of Liberal Arts to support research in the humanities	X	X	New endowment	\$2,000,000 to \$5,000,000	External donors	Establishment of center	3.1
GEO 3.8	Recruit senior (Associate and Full Professor level) faculty in support of increasing external funding and new curriculum/program development	X	X	Faculty lines	See Part III	Provost	Number of senior tenure-track and tenured faculty lines	3.1; 3.3

Academic Plan -

	<b>University Goal 4: Provide the necessary services, resources, and infrastructure to support the university's strategic direction.</b>							
GEO 4.1	Maintain efforts to level Geography faculty salaries at Texas State with research-intensive, PhD-granting Geography departments in the United States in support of retention and recruiting goals	X	X	Salaries	To be determined	Provost	Salary increases and retention of faculty	4.1
GEO 4.2	Maintain and enhance the participation of faculty and staff in professional development and training opportunities, including on- campus workshops, and AAG summer workshops, and others	X	X	None	\$3,000-\$5,000 annually	Department	Faculty participation numbers and professional growth	4.2; 4.11
GEO 4.3	Maintain and enhance student, faculty, and departmental presence on internet and social media, via departmental website enhancements, expansion of social media outlets, and online education	X	X	Staff line (same as GEO 3.9)	See Part III	Provost	Number of staff members	4.2