**Admission Requirements for the MSGA Program**

**Undergraduate Admission**

Undergraduate students should apply for the MSGA Accelerated Degree Program in the second semester of their junior year (upon successful completion of 70 credits). Applications will be due on the Monday of the 6th week of that semester. Applicants should have a cumulative GPA of **~~2.7~~** 3.0 or higher based on a minimum of 12 UMW credits, have completed at least ~~two~~ three GIS courses each with a grade of B or higher, or have completed two GIS courses with a B and have an approved GIS portfolio. In addition, applicants should have completed at least one course in statistics and must provide a statement of purpose and two letters of recommendation. At least one letter should be from a UMW faculty member familiar with the student’s knowledge of GIS; both should be from people who know the applicant in either a professional or academic capacity, and can attest to the applicant’s graduate potential.

Once admitted, students will take MSGA 510 (Spatial Thinking) and MSGA 540 (Modeling and Spatial Statistics). These courses are not sequenced; 540 may be taken before 510.

On completion of the undergraduate degree, students may apply for formal admission to the graduate program, providing the forms and documents listed below. The two MSGA courses count toward both undergraduate and graduate programs if formal admission to the MSGA program is received within five years of the award of the undergraduate degree.

**Continuance Requirements (Undergraduate)**

To continue in the program, students must achieve a grade of B (3.0) or better in each of the graduate courses and must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher ~~than~~ **~~2.7~~**.

**Graduate Admission**

* Earned bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university
* Successful applicants typically have a GPA of 3.0 or higher from undergraduate course work. In addition, students are required to have successfully earned credits in at least two college-level GIS classes, and in at least one statistics class; in lieu of completed coursework, students can gain admission by providing documented evidence demonstrating they have worked with a GIS, such as ArcGIS, Grass, MapInfo, IDRISI, Intergraph – or the equivalent software – on a range of projects indicating competence in the topics typically covered in upper-level undergraduate GIS. Students may be considered for provisional admission without having previous GIS coursework or related work experience under the agreement that if they are admitted they must take GISC 200 **and** GISC 351 or GEOG 351 prior to beginning their graduate-level courses.
* Non-native English speakers will provide evidence of proficiency in English.

***Required forms and documents:***

* Completed application for admission. The application form is found [online](http://admissions.umw.edu/graduate/arts-science/msga/).
* Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate course work.
* A statement of purpose outlining career goals.
* Résumé, stating relevant work experience; applicants without completed coursework in GIS need to provide documented evidence demonstrating their proficiency with GIS.
* GIS Portfolio: a sample of at least one GIS project (as from a work assignment or course) to include a writing sample, which will be used to assess the student’s ability to articulate an argument or communicate a set of ideas, and at least three examples of maps created by the student. One should show cartographic ability; one should demonstrate that the student has performed spatial analysis; and one should illustrate some form of problem-solving. Accompanying text should explain the map purpose and sources used. More examples of work completed by the applicant would be considered favorably. The portfolio itself may be in any format (e.g. PDF, webpage).
* Two letters of recommendation. One should be from a person who can attest to the applicant’s GIS or geospatial experience, **~~if applicable~~**. Both should be from people who know the applicant in either a professional or academic capacity, and can attest to the applicant’s graduate potential.
* Demonstration of English competency if English is not your native language. Scores should be sent directly to UMW from the evaluating organization. Any of the following is acceptable:
  + [International Language Academy](https://www.ila.edu/) (ILA) Intensive English Program (Level 12 completion)
  + [Test of English as a Foreign Language](https://www.ets.org/toefl) (TOEFL 80 iBT)
  + [International English Language Testing System](http://www.ielts.org/) (IELTS 6.5 on the academic exam)

Following an initial vetting of applications by University Admissions, an interdisciplinary committee consisting of full-time UMW faculty familiar with the geospatial field will evaluate submitted documents. This committee will determine if students without undergraduate coursework in GIS have sufficient knowledge to succeed in the program.

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