



Requirements for Graduation with Distinction in the Department of Geography and the Environment

A program leading to graduation with Distinction in the Department of Geography and the Environment is open to students majoring in environmental science, geographic information science, geography or sustainability science who maintain a minimum 3.75 grade point average (GPA) in the major and a minimum 3.50 GPA overall. Highly motivated students are invited to pursue this program based on a strong academic record and an interest in research and professional development.

- Students wishing to earn Distinction must be sponsored by a faculty mentor, who will be the student's thesis/project advisor. This partnership must be formalized no later than the spring quarter of the student's junior year. This deadline is to give the candidate sufficient time to complete a high-quality thesis/project.
- Before the end of junior year, students must identify a research-based problem or project topic and present a proposal to their faculty advisor who will approve or suggest alterations to the research plan. Students are encouraged to also seek funding through DU's Student Signature Work Grant program to support the proposed research.
- Once the topic and study plans are formalized, students will conduct research and write a thesis/project that represents an original contribution. The final thesis should be completed by the end of the fifth week of the spring quarter of the student's senior year. Students are encouraged to sign up for independent study credits to support finishing the thesis/project.
- Upon completion of the thesis/project, the faculty advisor must approve the thesis/project. Students are required to submit a proposal to present the results of their research/project at the annual Student Signature Work Showcase. The final approved thesis should be sent to the Department Chair, Associate Chair, and Program Director.