

Department of Geography & the Environment Prospective Graduate Student Application Checklist

All materials should be submitted via the online application through the Office of Graduate Admissions <https://www.du.edu/graduate-education/admission>.

Application Deadlines: Our on campus programs (PhD, MA, and MS-GIS) accept applications for Fall quarter matriculation only.

- *Priority Deadline:* **January 15**, annually. Final deadline: **April 15**, annually.
- For the online MS-GIS program, please consult the deadlines listed online.

1. **Personal/Research Statement:** Provide a personal statement of approximately 300-750 words that addresses the following items:
 - a. Describe your research or project interests in geography or GIS. This could be a specific project you wish to work on and methodological approach, or a more general topic of inquiry. Additionally (for on-campus program applicants), which faculty member(s) most closely aligns with your research interests and would be an appropriate graduate advisor?
 - b. What are your academic and/or professional goals, and what is the specific purpose for applying to the University of Denver to help achieve those goals?
 - c. Summarize your past education and other experiences and how they have prepared you for graduate school. If you feel that your academic record and experience are not representative of your abilities and potential in graduate school, please let us know any details you wish to share.
2. Applicants to the PhD, MA, and MS-GIS on-campus programs are strongly encouraged to contact faculty members with similar research interests who may serve as potential thesis or dissertation advisors.
3. An updated **curriculum vitae or résumé** is highly recommended but optional.
4. **Three (3) letters of recommendation are required for the PhD program and two (2) are required for the MA and MS-GIS programs.** These should be from people who can assess your potential for graduate research, such as recent professors or employers. Each recommender will receive an electronic invitation to submit a letter.
5. **Transcripts from previous degrees:** All graduate applicants must hold an earned baccalaureate from a regionally accredited college or university or the recognized equivalent from an international institution. The minimum undergraduate GPA for admission consideration to the MA or MS-GIS program is a cumulative 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.

The PhD program in Geography requires an earned master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution. The minimum GPA is a cumulative 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for all graduate coursework undertaken.

All questions about transcripts should be directed to the Office of Graduate Education gradinfo@du.edu .

6. **GRE Exam** scores are not required.
7. **English Language Proficiency:** Official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or C1 Advanced are required of all graduate applicants, regardless of citizenship status, whose native language is not English or who have been educated in countries where English is not the native language.

The minimum scores for admission as outlined by the Office of Graduate Education:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): 80 (iBT) or 550 (paper-based)
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS): 6.5
- Cambridge English: C1 Advanced: 169

Additionally, to be considered for a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) position

- Minimum TOEFL Speaking Section Score: 26 (iBT)
- Minimum IELTS Speaking Section Score: 8
- Minimum C1 Advanced Speaking Section Score: 200

All questions about English language proficiency requirements should be directed to the Office of Graduate Education gradinfo@du.edu .

Each year a limited number of Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) positions are available for applicants to the on-campus graduate programs. Applications received by the priority deadline will be considered for GTA positions.

Last Updated: June 24, 2026