Geographers study the relationship between humans and their environment. If you want to gain skills to address pressing environmental and societal issues such as climate change, natural disaster management, population growth and globalization; geography might be the right field for you.

Students in UW-La Crosse’s Geography Program gain experience using the latest technology to solve problems in their environment. They have access to professional Geographic Information System (GIS) software, drones and other high-end field equipment. They also gain perspective, understanding how past and present conditions on Earth guide decisions that will influence future generations. The program has taken students into the local community and all over the world — from the study of environmental contamination in local wetlands to the impact of climate change in the Himalayas.

What is geography?
Geography is the science of place and space. Geographers ask where things are located on the surface of the Earth, why they are located there, how places differ from one another and how people interact with the environment. Geographers have skills in cartography and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). There are four main branches of geography: human geography, physical geography, environmental geography, and geographic information science.

Careers in geography
Career opportunities for geographers and earth scientists have increased as our society has placed a need on understanding our environment and careful planning of our land — both locally and internationally. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics expects a large growth in geography-related jobs in the next decade.

Theories and skills learned in geography apply to a broad range of occupations. Our graduates have gone on to work for private businesses, government and non-profit agencies. For more details on alumni careers and wages visit the Geography & Earth Science careers page at www.uwlax.edu/geography-and-earth-science.

- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialist
- Environmental scientist
- Remote sensor
- Natural resource manager
- Hydrographic surveyor
- Urban or regional planner
- Cartographer
- Conservation planner
- Hydrologist
- Forester
- Unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) specialist
- Environmental consultant
- Surveyor
- Sustainability coordinator
- Transportation planner
- Natural and cultural resource mapping
- Meteorologist or climatologist
- Park ranger
What distinguishes UWL’s Geography program?

• **Access to cutting-edge labs and software**
  1. **Two state-of-the-art GIS computer labs**, each with over 30 high-powered computers with cutting-edge, industry-standard software.
  2. **Physical Geography and Earth Science classrooms** in the modern Prairie Springs Science Center outfitted for performing physical, chemical and biological analysis of soils, sediment and water. The labs contain an extensive rock and mineral collection, a wide variety of tools for hands-on learning of climate and Earth surface processes, computers loaded with physical geography and GIS-related software, two stream tables and an augmented reality sandbox.
  3. The **Physical Geography Research Lab** supports hands-on research for students and faculty. This modern wet lab provides the materials and facilities to analyze soils and sediment cores. Students have access to up-to-date scientific instruments to study past and present environments.
  4. **On-campus weather station**. This station is run by the Geography & Earth Science Department.

• **Invested faculty**
  Dedicated instructors, willing to devote considerable amounts of their time to individual students.

• **Research and exploration in our backyard**
  Unique opportunities for projects, research and explorations in the La Crosse area. Our campus is located within a mile of towering sandstone bluffs, a 900-acre urban wetland and the Mississippi River, all accessible through miles of hiking trails.

• **Research with faculty**
  Opportunities to work with faculty members on undergraduate research projects.

• **Study abroad, around the U.S.**
  Students have opportunities to participate in small group extended field trips to select parts of the U.S. and abroad. Geography students have traveled to study and conduct research in places, such as: Tanzania, Nepal, Belize, Cook Islands, Iceland and Puerto Rico.

• **Internship opportunities**
  Students who want internships typically find them easily as the demand for interns in this field is strong whether searching for opportunities in the private sector or at government agencies. This gives students strong preparation for future careers and can lead them to employment opportunities after graduation.

• **Access to field equipment**
  Geography students have access to field equipment, including boats, unmanned aerial systems (drones), field mapping and surveying technology, sediment and soil sampling equipment, sonar for aquatic mapping and much more.

• **Scholarship opportunities**
  A variety of scholarships are available for Geography and Earth Science students. UW-La Crosse also has a searchable database of scholarships.