

ASACR 4

Office of the President
May 8, 2015

Members, Board of Trustees:

ACADEMIC DEGREE RECOMMENDATION:
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Master of Science with a major in Digital Mapping degree in the Department of Geography, within the College of Arts and Sciences, effective in the Fall 2015 Semester.

Background: The master's degree proposal is part of a larger initiative to train students in a range of web-based systems for producing online geovisualizations and applications. Information about location and spatial analysis has become ubiquitous in everyday life and central to an array of disciplines, including soil science, public health, and the digital humanities. The demand for geospatial technology expertise is burgeoning. Location-aware devices, such as smart phones, have saturated everyday life and present enormous opportunities for online mapping tools and analysis in applications ranging from smart-city and civic development to human-environmental relations and increasing demands for 'big data' analytics.

The curriculum for the program is rich with technical training in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and online mapping including the creation and use of geodata; cutting edge techniques for scraping geodata from social media and other web-based sources; as well as online spatial visualization tools such as TileMill and D3. Students are challenged to critically engage with potential pitfalls of online mapping such as locational privacy and changing technical standards. The University of Kentucky is well-positioned with instructional assets in critical GIS and online mapping as well as strong ties to academic and industrial networks to serve a largely untapped market.

This program has the approval of the appropriate councils and the University Senate and has completed the 45 day review process of the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Provost of the University supports this recommendation.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____