GIsc Masters FAQ

Earth, Environmental, and Geospatial Sciences

Information about the Graduate Level GIsc Program:

The following provides brief descriptions of the graduate level GIsc Program, answers to some Frequently Asked Questions, and links to the websites where you can get more information about the courses, the students, the faculty, and so forth.

Brief Program Descriptions:

The Master’s of Science in Geographic Information Science (MS-GIsc) is a 40-credit graduate degree program that you may enroll in as either a part-time or full-time student. The requirements for the degree take two years to complete if you are a full-time student, and a bit longer if you are attending part-time. Courses are typically offered in the evenings, and some electives are given on-line to accommodate students who work full-time. We offer two options for the degree: the Professional Experience and Applied Research (PEAR) track, or the Traditional Master’s Thesis track. We have an active and very successful GIsc Internship/Professional Practice Program, and three specialization areas of study: Environmental and Health Spatial Sciences; Urban Sustainability; and GIsc Technology.

The Advanced Certificate in GIsc is a 17-20 credit program, with two required core courses and three GIsc electives. Depending upon the electives selected to meet the required 5 courses will determine whether the Certificate ends up being 17, 18, 19, or 20 credits. The courses are taken at the same time as the ones offered to the MS-GIsc students. GEP 605, Special Projects in GISc: Environmental Modeling and Spatial Analysis; and GEP 690, Workshop in Applied GISc Research are the only two required courses for the Advanced GIsc Certificate. Three GISc electives are also required. GEP 605 has a pre-requisite of GEP 505, Principles of GISc, or equivalent, and GEP 505 can be used as one of the required electives.
What are the admissions requirements for the Graduate GISc program?

In terms of admissions requirements, we look for a student who has attained a 3.0 GPA (out of a possible 4.0) in their undergraduate coursework, or at least a 3.0 GPA in their major courses. The undergraduate degree does not necessarily need to be in geography or an affiliated field, but the applicant should make clear in their personal essay why they are interested in the graduate GISc program here, and why they think they would be well suited for it. It also doesn't hurt to mention your goals and objectives of how you are planning to use GISc in your future career, and what you hope to gain from the program. We do not require GRE scores, but do require official transcripts of all post-secondary school coursework, and if your previous post-secondary education was at an institution outside of the United States, the transcripts must be translated and evaluated. If the instructional language was other than English, you must furnish TOEFL test scores. All applicants must obtain two letters (minimum) from professors or work supervisors who can assess your ability to complete graduate level work. There are no pre-requisite courses necessary for admission. Often, when students have a prior GISc background, either educational or professional, required introductory courses are waived and more advanced electives can be substituted.

What is the Application Process?

You can apply on-line at [https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=lehmangrad](https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=lehmangrad). Applications require a personal essay describing your background and why you are interested in the GISc Program at Lehman; an up-to-date resume; official transcripts of your coursework and degrees from all post-secondary educational institutions you have attended; 2 letters of recommendation from individuals who can assess your academic work as well as your potential for success in graduate study; and the Lehman College graduate school application fee. If your transcripts are from a non-US institution, translations and evaluations must be obtained. If the instruction was in a language other than English, then you must provide TOEFL scores. No GREs are required. We accept new students starting in both the Fall and Spring terms. The application process is the same for both the MS-GISc and the Advanced Certificate in GISc, because students in both are considered matriculated students. Please see [https://www.lehman.edu/graduate-admissions/applying/#deadlines](https://www.lehman.edu/graduate-admissions/applying/#deadlines) for application deadlines.

Can I just take a course or two to see if I like it?

Yes, there is also a non-degree option whereby students can earn up to 12 graduate credits, without matriculation into a graduate program. This requires a streamlined application through the same Apply Yourself system, a prior Bachelor’s degree, and transcripts from all post-secondary institutions. Credits earned as a non-degree (non-matriculated) student can later be applied to a matriculated program if accepted, provided the student earns a B or better in each course, and the courses are transferred into the degree program within 5 years of having taken them. Contact the Graduate Admissions Office if you are interested in taking credits on a non-degree basis. [ERICA.MORALES@LEHMAN.CUNY.EDU](mailto:ERICA.MORALES@LEHMAN.CUNY.EDU)
What is the Graduate GISc Program at Lehman College Like?

We have about 20-30 graduate students in the program at any given time, so it is a relatively small program. Classes are generally capped at 24 students, since that is the size of our main GISc teaching lab. Often classes are much smaller than that, especially specialty or advanced classes. This allows a very good ratio of students to professors. Our GISc labs are state-of-the-art, we have a full-time GISc Lab Manager, usually two or three GISc tutors, who are advanced students who keep hours in the lab to assist students, and the lab is open most weekdays and evenings. Students are also able to work at home on their own computers using student versions of the GIS software, although we encourage novice students to spend as much time in the lab as possible, since there is help there, and also students learn a lot from each other, and it helps to foster a sense of camaraderie amongst the students in the GISc program, at the undergrad, grad, and even doctoral level. Our classes are mainly in the early evening, usually starting at 6:00 PM to accommodate students who work or have other day-time commitments. Courses typically meet once per week, so if you take two courses per term, you would need to come up to campus twice per week (at minimum). However, a few of our elective GISc courses are online courses or hybrid online.

The GISc faculty is outstanding, and extremely accessible. We all are involved in active research as well as teaching, and some of us have worked professionally in GISc (as well as in academia) and therefore have a far-reaching network of GISc professionals to help us place students in internships and permanent positions upon, or in some case, even before graduation. We also have an MS-GISc Advisory Board, composed of GISc professionals in governmental agencies, research institutes, non-profit organizations, and private engineering firms, who help guide the program and mentor students.

How much will the program cost?

Here is a link to the tuition fee schedule:
http://www.lehman.edu/administration/business-office/bursar-office/tuition-and-fees.php

Please contact the Financial Aid Office for available loan programs and other avenues of financial support, at ELVIRA.SENESE@LEHMAN.CUNY.EDU

Is there Financial Support for Incoming Students?

There are no fellowships/scholarships available from the college or the program for incoming graduate students in the GISc program. Occasionally, exceptional students are hired as research assistants by individual professors who have research funding to do so. We also hire the best students as GISc Lab tutors, but this doesn't happen until the student has been here a term or two and has proved him or her self to be capable of tutoring and qualified in GISc. Additionally, paid and unpaid GISc internships are often available to intermediate and more advanced students, and in fact, doing one term of internship work is a requirement for the PEAR option of the degree. None of these employment options is guaranteed, however, and especially for your first term or two you would need to be self-supporting.
Do you accept students from other countries on International Student visas?

Yes, we typically have a number of students attend the program as international students. If you will be attending the program on an International Student Visa, I suggest that you contact the college’s Office of International Students and Scholars for questions about international student status, visas, employment-related issues, financial aid, and so forth, at 718 960-7274 or email Phyllis Proctor at PHYLLIS.PROCTOR@LEHMAN.CUNY.EDU

Websites:
Background on the GISc Programs at Lehman: http://www.lehman.edu/academics/eggs/geographic-information-science.php
You can get full details of program requirements and other information at: http://www.lehman.edu/academics/eggs/MS_GISc.php
The MS-GISc Program brochure can be viewed at:
Course descriptions can be found at:
http://www.lehman.edu/academics/eggs/documents/DescriptionofCoursesinMS_GIScProgram.pdf
And a departmental news page featuring activities of GISc students and faculty is at:
http://www.lehman.edu/academics/eggs/department-news.php
"Life After Lehman: Student Success Stories":
Examples of Student work: http://www.lehman.edu/academics/eggs/student-work.php
Faculty profiles: http://www.lehman.edu/academics/eggs/faculty-staff.php