

Bachelor of Arts in Geosciences

The Bachelor of Arts in Geosciences is a classical arts and sciences degree that gives students a great deal of flexibility in their choice of upper-division courses. Students must complete courses in the natural sciences, the social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities. This diversity of subjects provides an opportunity to learn about basic differences in outlook among different disciplines, the ways questions are raised and answered, and the ways the answers are validated and made relevant in practical use.

Students who plan to become professional geoscientists should pursue one of the BS Geosciences degree options. The BS Geosciences Major: UTech is available for students interested in pursuing a career teaching math and science at the middle and secondary school level.

Additional Requirements Specific to the BA Geosciences

The coursework counted toward the degree may include no more than 36 hours in any one field of study in the College of Liberal Arts or the College of Natural Sciences; and no more than 36 hours in any other single college or school of the University, including the Jackson School.

At least 18 semester hours of coursework in geological sciences, including six hours of upper-division coursework, must be completed in residence at the University. As long as all residence rules are met, credit may be earned by examination, by extension, by correspondence (up to 30 percent of the semester hours required for the degree), or, with the approval of the dean, by work transferred from another institution.

Degree requirements are divided into three categories: university-wide undergraduate degree requirements such as the University Core Curriculum requirements, prescribed work for the degree, and major requirements. In addition, the student must fulfill the University's general requirements and the requirements of the Jackson School of Geosciences.[†]

[†] Effective April 2025, UT Austin no longer requires Skills and Experience flags.

Prescribed Work

- a. Foreign Language Requirement: The BA, Geosciences degree requires that students achieve Intermediate-level proficiency in a foreign language as part of the degree requirements. The foreign language requirement is the attainment of a certain proficiency, rather than the completion of a specified number of hours. The number of semesters and total number of hours required vary by language. Any part of the requirement may be fulfilled by credit by examination. Courses used to fulfill the foreign language requirement must be language courses; literature-in-translation courses, for example, may not be counted. Consult the Intermediate-level language proficiency course list to see which classes are required to complete this degree requirement for a specific language. Students are encouraged to consult with their academic advisor about fulfilling the foreign language degree requirement.
- b. Social Science: Three semester hours in social science, in addition to the course counted toward the social and behavioral sciences requirement of the core curriculum. The course must be chosen from the following fields and it must be in a different field from the course used to fulfill the Core Curriculum social and behavioral sciences requirement.
 - a. Anthropology
 - b. Economics
 - c. Geography
 - d. Linguistics
 - e. Psychology
 - f. Sociology
- c. Natural Science: Six semester hours in natural sciences, in addition to the courses counted toward the science and technology requirements of the Core Curriculum. Courses must be chosen from the following fields; no more than three hours may be in either the history of science or the philosophy of science.
 - a. Astronomy
 - b. Biology
 - c. Chemistry
 - d. Marine science
 - e. Nutrition
 - f. Physical science
 - g. Physics
 - h. Mathematics
 - i. Computer science
 - j. Experimental psychology
 - k. Physical anthropology
 - l. Physical geography
 - m. Philosophy (courses in logic)
 - n. History of science and philosophy of science
- d. General Culture: Three semester hours in addition to the course counted toward the visual and performing arts requirement of the Core Curriculum. Courses in the following fields may be used:
 - a. Architecture
 - b. Classical civilization, Greek, Latin
 - c. Art history, design, ensemble, fine arts, instruments, music, studio art, theatre and dance, visual art studies
 - d. Philosophy (excluding courses in logic)
- e. Interdisciplinary Studies: 12 semester hours, of which at least six must be upper-division courses, in any one of the disciplines listed below. These courses must be in addition to those counted toward the Core Curriculum requirements, prescribed work or major requirements.
 - i. Anthropology
 - ii. Astronomy
 - iii. Biology
 - iv. Business
 - v. Computer science
 - vi. Chemistry
 - vii. Education
 - viii. Engineering
 - ix. Geography
 - x. Mathematics
 - xi. Physics
 - xii. Other disciplines may be chosen with submission and approval of a petition through the JSG Student Services Office.

- f. Enough additional upper-division coursework to total 36 semester hours.

Major Requirements

- a. Geological Sciences 401 or 303, 405, 416K, 416M, and 420K.
- b. Six semester hours in biology.
- c. Chemistry 301 and 302.
- d. Three semester hours in physics.
- e. Enough additional coursework to total 32 semester hours in geological sciences.
- f. A total of 120 hours of coursework including core, prescribed and major work.