

## **Greetings Prospective Students!**

Thanks for investigating graduate opportunities in the Gibbs Land Use Lab at UW-Madison. Below you will find some information for students interested in working with my research group, based either in the Department of Geography or at Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE), a research center of the Nelson Institute -- if you have additional questions, feel free to email me.

I have funding for one graduate student and one Post-Masters Research Associate to start in the fall of 2012. I'm excited to build a strong research team and anticipate having a group of roughly four M.S. and Ph.D. students and two Post-Doctoral / Masters Research Associates, with most research focused on applied, interdisciplinary questions around tropical land-use change, carbon emissions, and pathways to sustainable agriculture. Research methods will include GIS, spatial and statistical modeling, case studies and in-country stakeholder interviews. This type of research connects with multiple disciplines and degree programs, and I provide information below to help you choose the degree program that best fits your interests and career goals.

I will advise students in the Department of Geography and the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. Offices will be based in Science Hall and in SAGE, which both provide vibrant intellectual and social communities. Please see my homepage for more information about specific projects and research questions.

## **Applying to UW-Madison**

Potential students should select the graduate degree program best suited to their interests and career goals. Most students in my lab will be enrolled in the Nelson Institute's Environment & Resources or the Department of Geography's People and Environment Program. Both programs are intended for students wanting a deeply interdisciplinary and rigorous academic experience. For an overview of these programs or for detailed information on degree requirements and application procedures, please consult program web pages ([geography.wisc.edu](http://geography.wisc.edu) or [www.ies.wisc.edu](http://www.ies.wisc.edu)) and communicate directly with administrative staff (for Geography please contact the graduate coordinator, Sharon Kahn at [smkahn@geography.wisc.edu](mailto:smkahn@geography.wisc.edu), and for the Nelson Institute, Jim Miller [jemiller@wisc.edu](mailto:jemiller@wisc.edu)).

In addition to degree programs, the UW-Madison offers a range of optional graduate certificate programs allowing students to develop proficiency in specific areas and earn a credential to reflect this focus area. Two certificate programs overlap closely with the work of my group: Energy Analysis and Policy (EAP), and the Certificate on Humans and the Global Environment (CHANGE). Certificate programs are optional, but the interdisciplinary nature of our research lends itself well to the certificate program foci. Note that the CHANGE Certificate has its own Graduate Fellowships, which requires a separate application due in early January.

Support for students in my lab will typically come from Research Assistantships (RAs), where you contribute to a specific research project, and Teaching Assistantships (TAs)

where you help professors teach courses. Both RAs and TAs receive a stipend, personal health insurance and tuition remission. I also encourage all my prospective and current students to apply for their own funding through external fellowships especially the NSF Graduate Fellowship and the NSDEG Graduate Fellowship, which you can apply for while working on your UW application. Students in my lab would also be competitive for the DOE Global Change Environmental Program and NASA Earth System Science Program among others.

Once you have decided which program(s) to apply, you should fill out the on-line graduate school application. You can apply to up to three graduate programs (for the one application fee). As part of this process, contact your references and send them the information to send in their recommendations; have your official transcripts and test scores sent to UW-Madison; and, If applying for a fellowship, submit the respective application(s). Some on-campus fellowships also require you to submit a separate application (i.e. CHANGE Fellowship.) When you apply, note in your application the names of the professor(s) with whom you are interested in working -- be sure to read faculty biographies to make sure your interests match those of your potential advisor. In particular, applicants for the E&R PhD are required to designate an advisor when they apply.

I will definitely see any application that explicitly mentions me as a potential advisor, and you can make sure I don't miss your application by sending me a separate email with the following information: 1) a brief statement of your research and career goals, and your basic reasons for pursuing a graduate degree; 2) your resume or CV.; 3.) names and institutions of 3 people you will ask for letters of recommendation. I encourage you to email me before submitting your application if you feel that your interests are a good fit with my group.

Good luck with the application process!

Best,



Holly Gibbs  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Geography / Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Email: hkgibbs@wisc.edu