



Ph.D. in Geography | Graduate Admissions Frequently Asked Questions

TOEFL:

Institution Code for Clark University is 3279.

Please note that the GRE exam is no longer required for this program.

What are the requirements to apply for a Ph.D. in Geography?

All applicants need to submit the following in order to apply to our PhD program: personal statement, letters of recommendation, a resume/CV, academic transcripts, TOEFL/IELTS scores (if applicable), and application fee. To learn more about application requirements, visit our website: <https://www.clarku.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/how-to-apply/applicationrequirements/>

Do I need a Master's degree to apply for a Ph.D. in Geography?

We do not require applicants to have a Master's degree in order to qualify for the program.

Do I have to pay tuition if I am accepted to Clark?

If you are accepted into the Geography PhD program, you are guaranteed 100% tuition remission and stipends (TA or RA positions) for a minimum of your first four years in the program.

What is the application deadline and is there any chance it can be extended?

The deadline for PhD Applications is **December 15, annually**. This means that we should receive all of your application materials, including relevant exam scores and recommendation letters, by this date. This is a firm deadline and prospective applicants should begin to assemble their materials early enough to meet it. Application materials that arrive after December 15 are not guaranteed to receive full consideration.

Is it possible to apply for the Ph.D. program if I am still finishing a degree listed in my application?

Yes, as long as you are on track to complete your current degree program before the PhD program begins (August), you may apply. Please be sure to provide an unofficial transcript to us with the institution detailed on it to confirm current enrollment.

Do the recommendation letters have to meet the deadline?

Yes, recommendation letters must meet the application deadline.

How many recommendation letters are required?

Three letters of recommendation are required, ideally from academic professionals who have taught or supervised you or with whom you have worked, and who can attest to your academic capability.

Who are the best people to have as referees?

Since your academic background is an important predictor of your success in a Ph.D. program, we look for letters from former professors or others in a position to knowledgeably evaluate your academic accomplishments and your promise to succeed in a demanding program.

How important is the statement?

The statement is your opportunity to present yourself to us. We read it carefully and a strong statement can make an application stand out. On the other hand, a weak statement will harm the prospects of an otherwise impressive application.

What do you look for in the personal statement?

We want to have a clear idea of your achievements and goals and why you want to come to Clark (rather than another graduate program). While we do not expect applicants to have a dissertation topic in hand, we are very interested in what field or fields of geography interest you and why. Similarly, we look for synergies and overlapping interests between applicants and our faculty. If you do not have a background in geography, we want to know what topics or research questions interest you and why you believe our geography program is the place where you want to pursue them.

Do you recommend that I visit Clark before applying?

Although we encourage visits by prospective students, a pre-application visit is not required and failure to make such a visit will not penalize your application. That said, if you can make such a visit, we do recommend it. Visiting the campus is an efficient way for you to get to know our faculty, program, and university environment and for us to get to know you and assess how your interests might fit with our program.

It is important that your visit be arranged as far in advance as possible to work out the best timing for appointments to be set up with faculty relevant to your interests and graduate students. Please note that generally we do not accept visitors through midFebruary (during finals week, winter break, and the period during which the committee is reviewing applications and before decisions are made). If you are interested in scheduling a time to visit, please email Geography@clarku.edu.

Do you offer waivers/funding for exam fees?

Unfortunately, we do not offer any fee waivers or funding for TOEFL exams (or any other relevant qualifying exams).

I am an international student. Do you require TOEFL scores (Test of English as a Foreign Language)?

Yes, we do require TOEFL scores from international applicants applying from anywhere English is not a native language. Ph.D. level graduate work requires a high level of proficiency in reading, writing and speaking English. Students may also take the IELTS exam in place of the TOEFL.

Information about taking the TOEFL exams, including a list of all sites where it is administered worldwide, the examination dates, and advice about how to register locally, can be obtained from the [ETS web site](#) . The ETS advises students to register early as number of places at some test sites can become filled in advance of the test.

Is there a minimum TOEFL score to qualify for the program?

Generally, the department sets an internal minimum of 100 for TOEFL exam scores. Applicants scoring below 100 may be admitted, but we encourage such applicants to provide additional evidence of their English proficiency.

Is it possible to waive the TOEFL/language exam requirement?

Yes, if qualified. If an international applicant from a non-English speaking country is currently studying at the university level in an English-speaking country OR has earned a university degree in one of these countries within the last ten years, a TOEFL waiver may be requested. To request a TOEFL waiver, once your application has been submitted, please contact Graduate Admissions.

I need financial aid to help support my admission offer from Clark. Do I need to fill out a financial aid form? We do not require the completion of financial aid forms. International students do need to fill out a Financial Statement Form, however. This is a requirement of the United States Immigration Service who need bank certification that the student or his or her family have sufficient resources to support the student, if necessary, during the summer months and or beyond the three-year funding base.

What fees do I need to pay as an incoming PhD student?

For a full list of costs/remissions for accepted PhD students, please visit the Tuition and Financial Assistance page on our website: <https://www.clarku.edu/admissions/graduate-admissions/tuition-and-financial-assistance/#1148>