Geography 476 GIS Practicum

GIS Certificates; Professional Certifications

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**RE:** GIS Technical Certifications

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## Problem

Although the necessity of accurate map production has been recognized for centuries, in our modern world of regulations the industry professionals responsible for providing these maps are not uniformly trained, tested, or certified. In fact, the different levels of education offered, both prior to entering the workforce and during/after working, are not sequential, comparable or synchronize. The wide range of GIS approaches, software, application, education and training sources, do not converge into an unambiguous testing procedure for the profession. Some professions which require passing a professional level technical test to be able to work are Doctors, Lawyers, Educators etc. However as a GIS worker, their loosely interpreted expertise has not defined a best way to guarantee proficiency one way or not. All it takes is “knowing how to use the software to do what you need it to” but those are the people these testing certifications need to be weeding out of the industry. Sadly though, a deep understanding of data types and how or why the computer represents what you click it to is not required. Commercial software and equipment make it available for anyone to pick up as a job if they wanted to.

###### WHAT TO DO:

Currently, the levels of education involved with GIS start off with GIS certificate programs, GIS minors of study, GIS majors of study, and on to GIS master’s degree and PhD degree programs. And, outside of the educational sphere the two most commonly recognized technical certifications in the workplace are a GISP (GISprofessional) or an ESRI Technical Certification.

## GIS\_Professional vs. ESRI Certification

[Describe how project team members will communicate with each other. Include where project

###### GISP:

* Scored on years of experience,
* Cost $$$$ and must renew every 5 years
* All communication will be open and courteous. No “overtalking” or interrupting.
* Team members will keep each other informed.

###### ESRI:

* Scored by a test of questions; online cheat-ability?
* Cost $$$$
* Team members will appreciate the sensitive nature of information discussed during this project and will share with care. Where applicable, documents will include a footer indicating that information is confidential.

## Decision Making

[Describe how project team members will make decisions. Everyone must agree on how

###### WHAT TO CHOOSE:

1. Consensus means that everyone can live with the decision. It doesn’t mean everyone has to agree 100%.
2. The team will use thumbs up/thumbs down voting to make decisions quickly and move on.

* Thumbs up = agree with no further discussion.
* Thumbs sideways = agree, but have further questions. (Questions will be asked and answered immediately after the vote.)
* Thumbs down = cannot agree to the solution proposed. (Be prepared to answer the question: What would it take for you to go to thumbs sideways or thumbs up?)  
  Anyone on the team may call for a vote at any time.

1. Members may abstain from voting. Personal Courtesies