Mountains, oceans, volcanoes—are you enthralled with Earth’s physical features? Or perhaps you scrutinize maps, pine for new locales to explore and contemplate humanity’s interaction with the planet? Calvin approaches geography, geology and environmental studies with the lens of a Christian worldview as shaped by the Bible; confessional themes such as creation–fall–redemption; and biblical norms of justice, stewardship, restoration and reconciliation. Calvin’s faculty teach and conduct research from a Christian perspective, helping students explore the magnificent planet God has entrusted to us.
GIS, Remote Sensing, and Cartography @ Calvin College

Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing, and cartography are taught at Calvin College. Our focus stresses the importance of spatial thinking as well as sound techniques. Each course taught in the department exposes students to a variety of lectures and labs and gives them the opportunity to participate in projects that are geared toward student interests. Themes include issues of social justice, mapping less-developed countries, and urban dynamics. Cartographic design elements are taught in conjunction with spatial analysis and students are encouraged to move beyond the classroom to have impacts in the community.

Facilities

The James A. Clark Geospatial Laboratory is located in the department and housed in North Hall on the Calvin College campus. Our 21 PC-based lab has a variety of advanced hardware and software and is maintained and updated by faculty and CIT staff. Our lab has grown from the generous contributions of Paul and Cathy Scholten and support from The National Science Foundation.

Resources

We have a host of hardware and software to provide resources for teaching and research. Each machine features dual flat-panel monitors, 3 GB of RAM, an optical mouse, 120 GB hard-drives with 30 GB allotted for personal use, Black & White, and full color laser printing up to 11x17 prints. We use ArcGIS and have a variety of extensions from which to conduct spatial analysis, including spatial analyst, 3D analyst, network analyst, and tracking analyst, to name a few. In addition to the ArcGIS suite of products we use Erdas Imagine for remote sensing scholarship. Geostatistics are run using SPSS and Geoda. In addition we use Rock Works, the Microsoft Office suite, Adobe products, and Canvas with the GIS– extension in teaching and research.

Growth

Our focus prepares students for real-world GIS projects and provides excellent foundations for graduate school work. Graduates from our program go into the field with applied knowledge. Calvin College is a center for Geo-spatial training synergy for the West Michigan community. Come join us!