Beginning to Incorporate Spatial Thinking and GIS into a Liberal Arts Curriculum

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• Small liberal arts college
  – Few majors in the Social Sciences
    • Students planning to teach K-12 Social Studies
      must have a geography course
  – Many students using social science courses
    as liberal arts electives in professional programs
Liberal Learning Curriculum
--Six goals

1. Foster Core Skills
2. Prepare Students for Living in a Diverse and Global Society
3. Emphasize and Develop Inquiry Strategies and Capabilities in a Variety of Disciplines across the Curriculum
4. Foster Research Skills
5. Promote Integrative Learning
6. Prepare Students for the Examined Life, Promoting Commitment to Lifelong Learning
3 Components

• GIS courses
  – 2-semester sequence
• Incorporating spatial thinking in existing classes
  – Junior symposium
  – Other social science classes
  – Professional classes
• Raising faculty awareness and abilities
  – Short presentations on GIS
  – Day-long workshop
    • Introducing spatial analysis as a tool
    • Modeling best practices and current research uses
    • Hands-on practice