

NATURE OF WORK

The geographic information specialist combines the functions of mapping science and surveying into a broader field concerned with the collection and analysis of geographic data. Geographic information systems (GIS) is typically used to handle maps, which combine information that is useful for environmental studies, geology, engineering, planning, business marketing, and other disciplines. As more of these systems are developed, a new type of mapping scientist emerged from the older specialties of photogrammetrist and cartographer; called the geographic information specialist.

WORKING CONDITIONS

A geographic information specialist usually works 40 hours a week. This career calls for planning surveys, analyzing data, and preparing reports and maps, causing geographic information specialists to spend virtually all of their time in offices. They rarely visit the sites they are mapping.

TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

Most employers prefer applicants who have completed postsecondary training in surveying with extensive on-the-job training. With the development of GIS, cartographers and photogrammetrists need additional education and stronger technical skills, which includes additional experience with computers. With this additional education they can become GIS technicians, GIS specialists, or GIS analysts.

JOB OUTLOOK

Overall employment is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through 2018. The availability and use of advanced technologies, such as GPS, GIS, and remote sensing equipment, will continue to increase both the accuracy and productivity of these workers, resulting in modest overall growth in employment. These advanced technologies also enhance employment opportunities for surveyors, as well as for those surveying technicians who have the educational background and who have acquired technical skills that enable them to work with the new systems.

CAREER OPTIONS

Geographic Information Technician

ESTIMATED SALARY RANGE

New Mexico— \$33,142-\$55,162

Nationally — \$38,800-\$70,010

(depending on skill, experience and responsibility)

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Civil engineers, architects, landscape architects, conservationists, technicians, specialists, analysts, and geoscientists

SJC Basic Program Information

The Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIST) program provides students with education in mapping and spatial database technology including GIS, GPS, remote sensing, and spatial analysis techniques. Instruction emphasizes application to a variety of fields through hands-on learning with state-of-the-art hardware, software and other mapping tools.

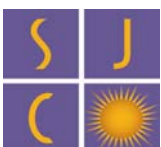
For further information go to:

www.sanjuancollege.edu/pages/158.asp

Click on AAS link under Career Programs

www.bls.gov/oco/ocos040.htm

www.gis.com/



*Most of this information is from the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-2011

Updated as of July 28, 2010