

Teaching GIS in English in a Chinese University

Tao Wang^a

^a College of Geospatial Information Science and Technology, Capital Normal University, wangt@cnu.edu.cn

Keywords: Geographic Information System, English, Pedagogy, Evaluation

Abstract:

Principles and Methods Geographic Information System is a mandatory course for undergraduate students in the major of Geographic Information Science and other relevant majors in Chinese Universities. In recent years, student enrolling in Chinese universities aspire to acquire professional knowledge from broader sources. Teaching mandatory courses in English can offer an opportunity for these students and also help them build a lifelong learning capability.

Although English skills of undergraduate students in the third semester is at a level of general daily communication. Teaching non-language courses in English faces challenges including students' background, preparation knowledge and consistent evaluation with the same course taught in Chinese.

The GIS major at Capital Normal University has been developing joint education programmes with Universities abroad at undergraduate and graduate levels. At the same a plan of Internationalisation at Home (IaH) was initiated in 2015. In this case of *Principles and Methods Geographic Information System*, students who have finished entry level courses have options to go either the one taught in Chinese or the one in English. The latter is not a simple translation of the Chinese version, but adopts new contents and open assignments. Key topics are reshuffled to accommodate applications into theory sections. International students are normally accommodated together in this course.

Self-evaluation shows that students in this Course increased their capabilities of scientific reading and writing, although pre-defined goals have been barely achieved. This course was listed on the Course of Excellency in 2020 by Ministry of Education and received further support to upgrade.