

Common Features Applied GIS Labs in GEOG 4220/5220

There are three key features that you will find in each business GIS lab in this course.

1. Tasks and Steps

Each lab consists of tasks (major milestones that collectively build to achieve the exercise goals) and steps (minor milestones that need to be completed to finish each task).

2. Rough Notes

While some steps (defined above) are simply activities you need to do in your analysis, a few steps are flagged as being “rough notes”. These rough notes are steps where something needs to be recorded or saved. This might involve a brief, written note summarizing or giving your interpretation of an intermediate analytical result, or it may involve saving a map, graphic, or a report produced by your GIS analysis. These rough notes must be completed and submitted together in a separate “rough notes” document, but you need to understand that these notes are primarily for your reference and are not the final report for the exercise.

3. Final Report

Each lab concludes with a final, common challenge: create a document that summarizes the key elements of the exercise:

1. **Exercise scenario:** what is the situation you are addressing? Put the basic scenario in your own words, including the business/organization you are working for, what they do, and what the geographic focus of the exercise is.
2. **Question to be solved:** what is the central problem (or problems) you need to solve within the scenario defined above? This section could be short, but it needs to have a clear question/problem statement.
3. **Analytical approaches used:** what specific GIS analytical techniques did you use to answer your question? List these techniques and provide a brief justification as to why these techniques are useful in your situation.

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4. **Results obtained:** what did you find through your GIS analysis? This section should provide a filtered view of the most important results from your perspective. This view will include both commentary and supporting materials (maps, graphics, etc. extracted from your GIS analysis). You will not necessarily include every result you generated in your analysis, so thoughtful assessment of what is most important to include is crucial here.
5. **Application:** a concise and impactful summary of the application of your work, addressed to the needs of the decision-makers you are supporting in the scenario you have been given.

This final report can and should draw on the raw material (comments, maps, etc.) you assemble in your rough notes, but

- You need thoughtfully assess which material to include (not all of this material will make it), and
- You need to use all of the writing skill you have to create a compelling and concise narrative that takes no more than 4 pages plus supporting material (maps, GIS reports, graphics that you specifically select as important to include).