PhD in Economics combined with an Interdisciplinary Degree in Remote Sensing

Spatially explicit analysis has become increasingly important in applied economic research, especially in light of climate change. Prominent examples include the economic implications of forest mortality and changes in forest composition over time, agricultural productivity under different climatic stressors and human interventions, and the effect of spatially differentiated environmental changes on housing markets.

Virginia Tech (VT) offers a unique opportunity to combine its **PhD program in Economics** (jointly administered through the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Department of Economics) with an **Interdisciplinary Graduate Education Program in Remote Sensing** (RS-IGEP).

PhD Econ/RS-IGEP students take an additional 12 course credits based on four courses related to Remote Sensing, and participate in a weekly seminar, in addition to their standard curriculum leading to the PhD in economics. By completing these requirements, PhD Econ/RS-IGEP students will also earn a certificate in Remote Sensing.

More importantly, RS-IGEP students can tap into VT's premier research group in this area for research and dissertation advising. There are also some funding opportunities for RS-IGEP graduate students, beyond those that might be available from their home department.

In a nutshell, the PhD Econ/RS-IGEP combination is ideal for prospective PhD students in applied economics that have an interest in spatially explicit research, or envision remote sensing to become an important tool in their dissertation work, or – looking further - their targeted career.

More details on the additional coursework, affiliated faculty, and current and past grad students can be found on the RS-IGEP home page at http://rsigep.frec.vt.edu/.

How to apply:
<u>New students:</u>

1. In VT's online application form, choose *"Remote Sensing"* under *"Please select a Program,"* and *"PhD"* under *"Please select a degree type."*
2. In the statement of purpose, clearly indicate that you are pursuing a PhD in economics through the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAEC). Also, make a strong argument why/how you would like to combine this degree with an interdisciplinary graduate experience in Remote Sensing.

3. Ideally, at least some reference letters should speak to your prospects for success in both applied economics and applications of economics and remote sensing / spatial analysis.

Existing AAEC PhD students:

1. Inform Professor Klaus Moeltner (moeltner@vt.edu) of your interest in the RS-IGEP program.
2. Prepare a written statement of 1-3 pages why/how this would fit into your graduate work and career plans. Also indicate if you would like to be considered for funding through the RS-IGEP program.
3. Prof. Moeltner will circulate your statement amongst RS-IGEP faculty, who will decide as a group on admission and funding, if applicable.