In keeping with the needs of the GIS Industry and following UNA’s development of interdisciplinary minors in the field of Human Computer Interaction/User Experience (HCI/UX), the Department of Geography has introduced a new minor called Geospatial Human Computer Interaction/User Experience (GEOHCI/UX). GEOHCI/UX is an emerging concept which integrates location-based knowledge, spatial cognition and fundamental aspects of geographic design and representation into the computer-human interaction domain. The need for geospatial information in the marketplace is growing rapidly, and so is the increase in organizations that utilize location-based information. This minor will produce broadly trained geographers with knowledge from other related disciplines that incorporate system development, design and user-experience aspects. The HCI/UX minor is also being offered in other departments in UNA including: Art, Computer Information Systems, English, and Psychology. While the bulk of the coursework will be taken in the home departments, all UNA students pursuing the HCI/UX minor will take the introductory course and senior capstone project together. It is expected that the interdisciplinary minor will broaden students’ perspectives and also enhance their employment chances in the job market. Referring to the HCI/UX initiative, a corporate representative in the Huntsville area who visited UNA remarked, “...we want computer people who are not afraid of people and people who are not afraid of computers.” Since our corporate partners insist they want our ‘best and brightest’, admission to the minor is designed to include a rigorous vetting process. We expect to graduate the first cohort in December 2014.

-Dr. Francis Koti