URGE Resource Map for Utah State University

This document is a draft Resource Map for **USU-GEO Pod** at Utah State University. This document was adapted from the "Sample Ph.D. Mentoring Plan" developed by Vashan Wright (Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution) and Karin Block (City College of New York and CUNY Graduate Center), License: [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/). We provide an overview of current resources that exist at USU to support new-hires and graduate student's from diverse backgrounds or marginalized communities.

**Utah State University Resources**

- **Mentoring plan**
  - All tenure-track new hires at USU go through a required campus-wide Orientation training program that typically meets in person so that faculty can meet and network with peers outside of their department (this past year it was online Due to Covid-19) [https://www.usu.edu/provost/new-faculty/orientation](https://www.usu.edu/provost/new-faculty/orientation). HR also has specific information for all new hires [https://hr.usu.edu/benefits/newemployee](https://hr.usu.edu/benefits/newemployee).
  - USU has a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force that is comprised of 5 working groups: 1) Faculty and Staff hiring; 2) Training, Instruction and research; 3) Acknowledgement of Native Lands; 4) Student Recruitment, Retention and Success; and 5) On-campus Diversity Committees and Organizations; [https://www.usu.edu/president/initiatives/diversity-and-inclusion/](https://www.usu.edu/president/initiatives/diversity-and-inclusion/).
  - Three annual events are hosted each year that focus on diversity ~ the Inclusive Excellence Symposium ([https://thinkcareact.usu.edu/symposium/](https://thinkcareact.usu.edu/symposium/)), the President's Diversity Dinner ([https://thinkcareact.usu.edu/diversitydinner/](https://thinkcareact.usu.edu/diversitydinner/)), and the President's Diversity Awards ([https://www.usu.edu/equity/diversity-awards/](https://www.usu.edu/equity/diversity-awards/)).

- **Faculty Evaluations**: Tenure-track new-hires have a promotion committee assigned soon after they start their position. The Dept. of Geosciences (the Dept. Head) conducts an annual review. Faculty input and update research products, teaching, dept. service, accomplishments, etc. within Digital Measures annually. The PAC committee meets with faculty member annually and provides advice and review along the journey. Currently, Tenure-track and term-appointed are evaluated similarly, however, the Faculty Senate has been working to understand how to address specific concerns brought forth by term faculty. Changes to faculty code have helped to ensure that term faculty are provided the timely opportunity for promotion. A recent faculty survey identified concerns of equity in the areas of the promotion process for term appointed faculty. A task force is working to review faculty code and university policies that impact term faculty. Currently the faculty senate have initiated a process where they “are seeking feedback from all term appointed faculty on areas where code or policy can be improved to help term faculty be successful and appreciated at USU. To begin the process the faculty senate has asked for input on what topics are of concern to term faculty across the university community. We will be developing a survey to gather statistical data and identify priorities for the task force to work on.”
  - New hires meet with their committee once in their first semester to go over promotion process and seek advice on any questions they may have related to their position.
- **Student Evaluations**: When graduate students arrive in the Dept. of Geosciences at USU, they fill out a Coursework Checklist with their Major Advisor form that is formally reviewed by the Graduate Program Director. This form is used to determine if there are any critical pre-requisite courses or skills that may still be needed to excel within their specific research program and/or degree emphasis. Alternatively, certain course requirements can be waived if the Advisor does not consider this to be a critical deficiency for the student’s research program ([https://geo.usu.edu/ou-files/geology-dept-forms/Coursework%20Checklist-fillable.pdf](https://geo.usu.edu/ou-files/geology-dept-forms/Coursework%20Checklist-fillable.pdf)).

- Individual Advisors and their graduate students arrange the interval/frequency of meeting times and expectations related to research, publishing, lab work, time management etc. *We acknowledge that we need a more formalized department-wide policy and/or training for Advisors as expectations can vary greatly and cause issues with fairness and inequities across the program, especially for the student.*

- **Graduate Student Evaluations**: The Department of Geoscience’s has an annual required Self-Evaluation for Graduate students that is a two-part process. Each graduate student on an RA or TA. must complete a Individualized Development Plan (IDP) via a software tool that is required by USU’s College of Science ([https://www.usu.edu/science/pages/students/graduate-individual-development-plan](https://www.usu.edu/science/pages/students/graduate-individual-development-plan)). “The IDP tool is an Excel spreadsheet. Several pages on the spreadsheet walk you through a series of questions to help you evaluate your abilities with respect to “core competencies” expected of STEM graduate students. (See the description of core competencies here.) You will then set goals and identify mentors to give you feedback and help hold you accountable for the goals you set. When you have completed each section, you can print out a certificate of completion to give to your department and/or thesis/dissertation committee.”

- Many of the ideas for the IDP tool were inspired by the following resources: **AAAS myIDP** - This is an interactive website designed to help you explore career interests as well as develop an IDP. The website also contains several articles and other resources to help you along your career path; **University of Wisconsin-Madison**; **Florida State University**; **American Chemical Society** - Career Planning Tool.

- This is a multi-step process that involves completion of the IDP tool, the Depart. Of Geosciences Graduate Student Self-Evaluation Form [https://geo.usu.edu/ou-files/geology-dept-forms/Annual%20Student%20Evaluation-covid-fillable.pdf](https://geo.usu.edu/ou-files/geology-dept-forms/Annual%20Student%20Evaluation-covid-fillable.pdf). The final step involves a meeting between the Student, Advisor, and Committee Member’s and all discuss and review and revise if necessary before signing form.

- **For additional Career Pathways** we maintain a list of internships and job postings on a Job’s and Opportunities page [https://geo.usu.edu/opportunities/index](https://geo.usu.edu/opportunities/index) as well as send out emails to our graduate student email list.

- **Core work resources**
  - **Code-of-conduct** - [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/). All students and faculty are expected to abide by this code of conduct that addresses non-discrimination, goals, values and academic integrity. Based on consideration of the readings and discussions presented by URGE, the Dept. of Geosciences is developing a new Department-specific Code of Conduct that every undergraduate and graduate student, as well as all faculty and staff will sign annually.

  - Student resources are listed in the graduate student handbooks specific to Departments so that graduate students know who they can talk to and who are their advocates - [https://usu.app.box.com/v/WATSgraduatehandbook](https://usu.app.box.com/v/WATSgraduatehandbook) (Watershed Sciences Department), [https://geo.usu.edu/ou-](https://geo.usu.edu/ou-).
Communication plans and expectations vary between each Advisor and graduate student. Our Departments have graduate student and faculty lists to send out group emails to communicate important or relevant community information to all members of the Dept.

Reporting Discrimination and Harassment at the Office of Equity - https://www.usu.edu/equity/non-discrimination/. In addition to a student’s advisor, this office is an appropriate place to address problems related to insensitivity, harassment, and exclusion. “If someone has experienced bias, racism, or microaggression, they can also seek support directly through USU’s Social Climate Support Team. Additional resources and support are available through the Office of Equity, Aggies Thrive, and Human Resources. Additionally, if an issue is reported to the Office of Equity but does not rise to the level of a discrimination policy violation, or if there is not enough information to pursue a formal investigation (e.g., the person experiencing discrimination does not know the identity of the person who committed the violation), the Office of Equity will refer the incident to the Social Climate Support Team for outreach and support.”

Reporting Sexual Assault and Anti-Violence on campus ~ https://www.usu.edu/saavi/. Off campus any member of our community can contact CAPSA seeking help from domestic violence or sexual assault.

Field Equipment – Contact department head and/or department administrator to find individual field gear like hiking boots, waders, first aid kits, satellite phones, etc. Many items can be borrowed from labs within the department and the Dept. of Geosciences has a gear closet for items such as waders, sledge hammers, hard hats, safety vests, Brunton Compasses, etc. Additionally, camping and a few field items such as tents, canoes, waterproof river bags, can be rented by students for a 35% discount from USU’s Outdoor Recreation Program- https://www.usu.edu/campusrec/outdoor_programs/op_rentals.

Conference and workshop participation (how often and who pays for it?)

- Students are not required to attend workshops/conferences, however, it is strongly encouraged within our Department for a Graduate student to present at least once during their time at USU. Depending on the location of the conference (<10 hour drive), we provide vans for students to travel as a group. The Department covers the cost of this travel.
- If a student from the Dept. of Geosciences has an accepted abstract and is presenting at a conference, the Department pays for the Conference Registration.
- PI’s and Advisors typically cover the hotel and travel expenses and students may also seek additional scholarship or travel funding (e.g. GSA travel grants or Dept. specific travel grants). USU also offers an SGS Travel award that ranges from $200 - $400 dollars depending on geographic location. Students are eligible for these funds once per year ~ twice for an M.S. program and three times during a Doctoral Program.
- We have encouraged participation in workshops/conferences in groups like SACNAS, however, our current demographics are primarily white students.

Community support and mental health resources

- Incoming students are encouraged to speak with their major professors and/or department administrator for help finding accommodations. Moving expenses/assistance should be discussed with major professors prior to arriving on campus.
○ We currently do not have anything set up within our Dept. for Introductions for other people of color or funding membership fees for organizations, however USU does provide a list of internal funding opportunities for students https://www.usu.edu/intersections/funding/students. We need to continue to work on this.

○ Students are encouraged to speak with their major professors regarding expectations for taking vacation and for reasonable work hours (e.g., 40 hrs/wk). We review expectations that TA roles are anticipated to be no more than 20 hours per week, with 20 hours reserved for research. RA roles are expected to be ~ 40 hours per week. These expectations are reviewed during our Graduate Student Orientation each fall.

● USU Community Services:
  ○ Student Health and Wellness Center - https://health.usu.edu/
  ○ Overall Student Wellness Comprehensive Website of Resources https://www.usu.edu/student-affairs/wellness
  ○ Food Pantry https://www.usu.edu/servicecenter/programs/snac
  ○ Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) - https://aggiewellness.usu.edu/logan/mentalwellness
  ○ Office of Equity https://www.usu.edu/equity/
  ○ Sexual Assault and Anti-Violence Information Office https://www.usu.edu/saavi/
  ○ Center for Intersectional Gender Studies and Research https://www.usu.edu/intersections/
  ○ Inclusion Center - https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/
  ○ Black Mental Health Matters - https://aggiewellness.usu.edu/logan/resource-info/black-mental-health-matters
  ○ Underrepresented Students Resources - https://aggiewellness.usu.edu/logan/resource-info/underrepresented-student-resources
  ○ We encourage and assist making connections to someone who may understand student experiences (e.g., Black male counselor for a Black male student)

○ USU organizations, and social clubs with common identities and/or interests:
  • USU Inclusion Center: https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/
  • USU Interfaith Initiative http://www.interfaith.usu.edu
  • Multi-cultural Student Services and School Lounge https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/multicultural/index
  • USU Latinx Cultural Center: https://latinx.usu.edu/
  • USU Black Student Union: https://www.facebook.com/usublackstudentunion/
  • Asian Student Association https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/clubs/asa
  • Undocumented Students https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/multicultural/dream
  • Indigenous Programs https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/indigenous/index
  • USU Native American Student Council: https://www.facebook.com/usunasc/
  • USU Polynesian Student Union https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/clubs/psu
  • USU Queer Student Alliance: https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/clubs/qsa
  • Logan Pride Center: https://www.loganpride.org/
  • Black Lives Matter Utah: https://www.blacklivesmatterutah.com/
  • Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection: https://www.cacherefugees.org/
• Center for Persons with Disabilities [https://cpd.usu.edu]
  ○ Inclusion Center Calendar of Events - [https://www.usu.edu/inclusion/events/index]
• Additional/ Broader Community Services:
  ▪ Logan has nearly 300 local clubs and organizations to help new students and faculty feel at home or to offer specific services.
  ▪ Organizations are listed on the Logan Library webpage, some of which include: Cache Valley Center for the Arts, Cache Pride Center, Disability Law Center, Utah Theatre, Jyushikan Aikido Dojo, Youth Soccer, Centro de la Familia de Utah, Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC) [https://library.loganutah.org/research___learn/community_directory.php]
  ▪ USU’s Interfaith initiative provides an extensive compilation of community faith organizations and calendar: [https://www.facebook.com/pg/USUInterfaithInitiative/events/?ref=page_internal]
  ▪ Citizens Against Physical and Sexual Abuse (CAPSA) [https://www.capsa.org]
  ▪ Planned Parenthood [https://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/utah/logan/84321/logan-health-center-2420-91730]
  ▪ Interfaith
  ▪ Black Lives Matter Utah provides a directory of black-owned-companies, include salons, barber shops, clothing, community organizations, gyms, bars, restaurants, caterers, artists, and event spaces - [https://www.blacklivesmatterutah.com/utah-black-owned-companies-.html]
• Skillset support resources
  ▪ All Graduate student RA/TA’s and new hires must take Driver’s Training (https://parking.usu.edu/fleet-operations/driver-training) to rent vehicles from motor pool, drive a USU vehicle, or drive a personal vehicle for USU Sponsored research. This training must be renewed every 3 years.
  ▪ Any Graduate student or faculty member working within USU labs must take a Lab Safety Training (https://research.usu.edu/ehs/laboratory-safety-initial/) through Environmental Health and Safety. A Safety Refresher training must be renewed annually for all lab users. For the Refresher Training, the Dept. of Geosciences hosts an annual seminar at the beginning of each year for all members of the Dept. to attend but this can also be completed online as well.
  ▪ Each lab and/or instrument within the Dept. of Geoscience’s may also require user-specific training. The PI and/or Lab Manager of the lab carries out these specific trainings or has another qualified user conduct the training.
  ▪ If working with X-Ray equipment, an additional 8-hour Radiation Safety course is required (https://research.usu.edu/ehs/radiation-safety-x-ray-initial/). A Radiation Safety Refresher course is also required annually (https://research.usu.edu/ehs/radiation-safety-x-ray-refresher/).
  ▪ USU offers Wilderness First Aid (WFA) courses (paid for by departments and/or major professors) and is available for all students who will be conducting field sampling and/or field research - [https://www.usu.edu/campusrec/outdoor_programs/op_courses/wilderness_first_aid]
  ▪ Available Coding resources at USU
    • Online Base R course: [http://learnr.usu.edu/].
• Matlab is freely available to USU faculty, staff and students at no cost and can be installed on university-owned and personally-owned computers, including online courses and tutorials - https://www.mathworks.com/academia/tah-portal/utah-state-university-541896.html.

• Professional development resources
  o All funded Graduate Students must take the Responsible Conduct of Research Training (RCR) https://research.usu.edu/compliance/RCR/ to develop awareness of ethical scientific research principles.
  o Teaching Assistants (TA’s) and Graduate Student Instructors are required to take a “0” credit online TA Training course (USU 7920) offered through USU’s School of Graduate Studies (https://gradschool.usu.edu/teaching-assistant-training/). An additional training program is required for International Students (IELI 7920). The IELI course “addresses understanding American undergraduates, classroom practices and environment, microteaching practicum, classroom language, cross-cultural awareness, and classroom management. The workshop culminates in a video-recorded presentation of the student that is evaluated based on overall comprehensibility and effectiveness in a teaching role.”
  o Additional professional skills trainings for Graduate Student’s are offered through USU School of Graduate https://gradschool.usu.edu/trainings-events/.
  o The Office of Empowering Teaching Excellence provides events, trainings, and programs for all USU instructors (all faculty ranks and graduate students teaching courses) https://www.usu.edu/empowerteaching/.
  o The Dept. of Geosciences is working to refine and update our Graduate Student Onboarding process and Department specific Orientation to provide more information on existing USU and community resources and Department/Advisor expectations. We will be referring to resources provided by NAGT on the “hidden curriculum of graduate school” and Cooke et al. (in revision) for guidance. https://nagt.org/nagt/profdev/webinars/grad_student_onboard/index.html.

• Currently there is not much in terms of specific guidance on Project management/budgeting, however, some information is provided on this in the Proposal Writing Institute for Faculty with a separate workshop geared for Graduate Students https://research.usu.edu/rd/grad-gw-seminar
• Social media Content Development (JCOM 4040, 3 units) - https://catalog.usu.edu/preview_course_nopop.php?catoid=12&coid=93706
• How to Get Meaningful Engagement on Social Media (USU extension) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPH_bBhHRmc
• Proposal Writing Institute - https://research.usu.edu/rd/proposal-writing-institute/
• To develop oral presentation skills, Geoscience’s Graduate Students must present an annual progress report presentation within a Department Seminar if they have not presented orally at a professional meeting for that year.
• The Department of Geoscience’s hosts an Annual Advisory Board Meeting where Graduate Students have a specified time to meet and network with
members (https://geo.usu.edu/advisory-board). However, the Dept. acknowledges that the current demographics of the board lacks diversity.

- Graduate students typically receive training for Design/drafting of figures using Adobe Suite/Python/ArcGIS in select courses, from major advisors, or from their peers. USU also offers a host of specific trainings https://training.usu.edu/find_a_topic
- Our Department is quite active in the AWG local SLC chapter and participates in their annual fundraiser each year. We send out emails to all graduate students to request their involvement and to notify regarding AWG scholarships.
- Fellowships, internships, summer experiences, field course opportunities are listed at https://geo.usu.edu/graduate-program/financial-assistance or https://geo.usu.edu/opportunities/index and we also frequently send out emails to our faculty/graduate lists to inform of additional funding and scholarship opportunities as they arise.
- Opportunities to meet one-on-one with Department of Geosciences or Ecology Center Seminar speakers are sent to faculty, staff and students to build professional networks.

- Outreach resources
  - Outline opportunities, expectations, benefits, and/or compensation for
  - Several years ago, USU’s Department of Geosciences had both a teaching mentor and Research Mentor for new professors. This practice no longer exists.
  - Currently we do not compensate students involved in our DEI efforts. We have one representative each for undergraduate and graduate students. These students are volunteers that serve on our newly formed DEI committee, both are white. We currently have only 1 person of color on our DEI committee who is not a full-time employee, thus, we seek guidance and input from USU’s Inclusion Center employees. Faculty and staff working on DEI issues are hopeful that this will be considered as part of our service roles within the Dept.
  - We need to develop policies that explicitly acknowledge, discuss, and suggest limiting the “time tax” put on people of color for participation as we do not have anything in place.
  - USU’s Department of Geosciences is working to establish an honoraria fund for invited seminar speakers. To date, we have not offered payment to any speakers but we do pay for all travel and associated expenses (during pre-covid times). Due to our Dept. size and limited available funds, we also try to draw from a mixture of Distinguished lecture series where we apply to a variety of National organizations to host speakers.