

URGEO

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for the Graduate Program of Hydrologic Sciences at the University of Nevada, Reno.

This is what was found by GPHS and Others at University of Nevada, Reno on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

Pods may have members from a range of career stages and involvement in the development and execution of research projects, and pod members may have different experiences or different perspectives when responding to these questions. Consider this in the summary document and focus on capturing responses that are representative of the range in your pod.

Please write about your experiences with working with communities of color, questions can be copied and pasted further down the document, even if they have been brief interactions, acknowledging that is important.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**
 - Alexandra Lutz, Ph.D
 - Brianda Hernandez (MS Student)
 - Native Waters in Arid Lands through DRI (liaison)
- **What worked well in these interactions?**
 - Having existing and working relationships with communities of color prior to the start of the research.
 - **Example:** Native Waters on Arid Lands has worked as a liaison between UNR/DRI researchers and Indigenous communities in the Great Basin and Southwestern U.S. in order to help increase climate resilience of Tribal agriculture and water resources.
 - <https://extension.unr.edu/program.aspx?ID=221>
 - <https://nativewaters-aridlands.com/>



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- Inclusion in designing the research questions with these communities in order to research relevant information that may be beneficial to the communities.
 - **Example:** Dr. Lutz and Brianda formulated their research design that looks into rainwater harvesting in arid environments for food sovereignty to address concerns of rural indigenous communities in the Southwestern U.S. that are being affected by climate change and the lack of reliable and safe water. Collecting rainwater for food sovereignty was important to these communities thus the research was changed from looking at the potential of rainwater harvesting for drinking to looking at the potential and then implementation of rainwater harvesting for food sovereignty.
- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**
 - Currently, the project is in the beginning stages, however, Dr. Lutz and Brianda will be reporting on their experiences (what worked/what didn't work/what can be improved) with working with communities of color at the end of their project. This will help guide senior and early career scientists in the GPHS who will be working with communities of color.
- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**
 - Open communication, collaboration and transparency are crucial in order to improve the outcomes of these projects. Likewise, maintaining a working relationship with these communities after the research project has concluded is equally important.
- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**
 - Early vs. senior career scientist: Senior career scientists should establish the relationships with the communities where their research is being conducted, this would allow for early career scientists to have a way to be connected to these communities early on.
 - There seems to be a lack of connection with research scientists, both senior and early career scientists, and communities of color. Science has focused, intensively, on the quantitative aspect of research, however, there seems to be a push at bridging the gap between the quantitative and qualitative research at GPHS. Establishing guidelines for



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working with communities of color for our program is important to ensure that good, ethical, and responsible research is being conducted.

