

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



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Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

Develop and publish a safety plan specific to your pod (lab, university, organization)

1. A code of conduct
2. Process for reporting violations
3. Outline training resources that are available and requirements for antidiscrimination, bystander intervention, and de-escalation training.
4. For field work, include a racial risk assessment of sites, a pre-departure checklist of discussions within the field team, procedures for documenting incidents in the field, as well as additional required or supported training

**We found the following policies related to Codes of conduct, reporting, training and field work in place at Rice/our dept as highlighted below. We felt that these policies were missing the following things discussed below and are currently on our action list. We also noted the lack of policies in place about a Faculty Code of Conduct, field trip risk assessment as mentioned below and we will be forming working groups to address these. These policies and missing action items are outlined in more detail below. We will update this document with our progress over the coming months.**

Existing guideline for EEPS:

1. Code of conduct for students (in graduate student handbook): <https://sjp.rice.edu/code-of-student-conduct#ApproachCode>
2. Process for reporting violations: From Session 2 deliverables: <https://policy.rice.edu/830a> , <https://policy.rice.edu/830> , <https://policy.rice.edu/828>

EEPS resources: Ombudpersons: <https://earthscience.rice.edu/academics/graduate-thesis-programs/#tab-id-5n>

Natural Sciences Ombudpersons: <https://naturalsciences.rice.edu/natural-sciences-ombudsperson>

3. Training: Sexual harassment prevention training for new students: mandatory: <https://catalog.rice.edu/browse/eo/courses/lasting-choices>

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4. Field trip safety guidelines: <https://earthscience.rice.edu/field-trips/field-trip-safety-guidelines/>

Mandatory trainings/Material: Code of Conduct, Defensive Driving course

Reporting: Field trip leader to maintain daily correspondence with Field trip committee via email( eg. AAPG Field trip in Mexico, Aug 2019)

### Missing information:

1. Code of conduct for members of the department other than students (DIJ committee is working on this-a department-wide code of conduct)
2. Process for reporting violations: Natural Science ombudperson on department website
3. Training: Mandatory bystander training : ADVANCE Geo, scheduled over Fall (DIJ committee) In the works: LGBTQ+ Ally training through Rice, conflict resolution training.
4. Field trip: Racial risk assessment, LGBTQ+ risk assessment, field trip accessibility

**Code of conduct: example code of conduct: Currently there is no policy at Rice that PI's must have a working code of conduct for their groups, and to our knowledge, none do. We will advocate for this policy change, and have included examples below. We will update this document with our progress over the coming months.**

[https://github.com/BahlaiLab/Policies/blob/master/Code\\_of\\_conduct.md](https://github.com/BahlaiLab/Policies/blob/master/Code_of_conduct.md)

Example: :To make clear what is expected, we ask all members of the community to conform to the following Code of Conduct.”

- All communication - online and in person - should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual or discriminatory language and imagery is not appropriate at any time.
- Be kind to others. Do not insult or put down other contributors.
- Behave professionally. Remember that harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary jokes are not appropriate.
- Please make an effort to make an inclusive environment for everyone. Give everyone a

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chance to talk and an opportunity to contribute.

- Watch out for [microaggression](#). *Be aware that your actions can be hurtful to others or contribute to a negative environment even if you had no intent of harm.* Listen. Offer a genuine apology. Commit to learning and doing better.
- A SPECIAL NOTE: Your work in this lab will be publicly available and recorded permanently on github. Please conduct yourself accordingly.

Unacceptable behavior includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of discussions, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.

*Participants asked to stop any harassing or discriminatory behavior are expected to comply immediately.*

### 1. Reporting: available resources for EEPS

<https://policy.rice.edu/830a> , <https://policy.rice.edu/830> , <https://policy.rice.edu/828>

EEPS resources: Ombudpersons: <https://earthscience.rice.edu/academics/graduate-thesis-programs/#tab-id-5n>

Natural Sciences Ombudpersons: <https://naturalsciences.rice.edu/natural-sciences-ombudsperson>

### 2. Training: available resources for EEPS

Available: LGBTQ+ Ally Training, Active bystander training:

<https://safe.rice.edu/programs/programs-and-trainings>

Potential: ADVANCEGeo workshops for implicit bias and microaggression:

<https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/workshops/index.html>

### 3. Field trips : all of the following are examples/resources outlining ways to improve

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**risk assessment for field trip planning and making field trips more accessible. We will update this document with our progress in the coming months. Currently, our field trip guidelines do not involve any racial risk assessment/ LGBTQ+ risk assessment. We will advocate for this policy change. Additionally, we added here a list of pre-departure field trip checklist that a PI could adhere to.**

<https://eos.org/opinions/ten-steps-to-protect-bipoc-scholars-in-the-field>

a) Racial risk assessment (esp in areas where there are no/few minorities), training on how to behave in case of possible confrontations (e.g.wear visible safety vests, carry papers/documentation/passports)

b)LGBTQ+ risk assessment for field trip locations. This is in the works with the Rice EEPS DIJ committee. The committee plans to enact a policy of NOT visiting countries where LGBTQ+ communities are persecuted.

c)Steps towards accessibility:

1. Greater emphasis on virtual field trips.

Reading materials and resources:

“In the United States, only 11% of undergraduate students with declared or documented disabilities are majoring in STEM subjects (Ellis et al., 2007, cited in Atchison and Libarkin, 2016), while in the United Kingdom, 14% of physical sciences undergraduates have a declared disability (Advance HE, 2018). All learners should perceive geoscience as an accessible academic subject with viable career options, irrespective of the requirement to spend time in the field. “

“field-trip culture is based on taken-for-granted notions that everybody is physically able”Nairn (1999)

[Making geoscience fieldwork inclusive and accessible for students with disabilities | Geosphere](#) (Stokes et al., 2019)

Example virtual field trips: [Virtual field trips created by JMU professors gain national recognition:](#)

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[-Virtual Field Trip to the Blue Ridge Province, Central Virginia](#)

[-Virtual Geologic Mapping Exercise at Lough Fee](#)

(Possible to harness existing resources such as these?)

Expertise on geological field trips already exists in the industry: [Digital Geology – Moving towards Geological Field Trips 2.0](#)

Access Mars: [Take a Virtual Field Trip With Access Mars](#)

[https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10899995.2019.1600962?casa\\_token=mF2mVYimfkUAAAAA:6By02Sg8y1usMXNy32xMX6t2Ha9Wtw\\_1wTcidCWdRRtKzz4MPwzDI\\_drk5irnAqO5O\\_SM865jv\\_zQw](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10899995.2019.1600962?casa_token=mF2mVYimfkUAAAAA:6By02Sg8y1usMXNy32xMX6t2Ha9Wtw_1wTcidCWdRRtKzz4MPwzDI_drk5irnAqO5O_SM865jv_zQw)

2. How we represent field trips as being essential to geology may create a negative impression on people who do not have a positive experience with the outdoors, especially people of color. The solution is to be more mindful of people's experiences while pitching a Earth Science career to them. Have a greater focus on the virtual/computational/modeling aspects of the field. E.g. Planetary geologists, Geodynamicists modeling the Earth's mantle, cosmochemistry, atmospheric sciences etc.

[Assessing Factors that Influence the Recruitment of Majors from Introductory Geology Classes at Northern Arizona University](#)

[GSA Today - Groundwork - Obstacles to the recruitment of minorities into the geosciences: A call to action](#)

e) Field camp alternatives: Students who need to work part/full time may be dissuaded from taking up Earth Sciences by the fact that field camp means spending 4-6 weeks away. Alternative: Lab camp. Lab proficiency is equally valuable in geosciences

d) We propose the implementation of pre-departure checklist of discussions within the field team, and here are a few potential topics:

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1. Food allergies
2. Medication availability
3. Availability of vegetarian/vegan options
4. Religious practices
5. Familial obligations
6. Familiarity with the terrain/camping/hiking (financial assistance in acquiring equipment? Rental facilities exist at Rice: <https://recreation.rice.edu/rope/rentals> ; Rice EEPS supports field camp costs for undergrads)
7. Practice camping/hiking weekend at Rice, before field camp
8. Instructors/TAs to ensure that slower people do not feel excluded/miss out on the discussions
9. Visa information
10. Discussion on accessibility of field stops
11. What to do in case of emergencies
12. Opportunities for food/water
13. Bathroom breaks/availability
14. Menstruation in the field-figure out with health center? (<https://youtu.be/jjFZ1nzijrI>)
15. Bathroom facilities for trans members of the group
16. International trips: discussion on context and culture, students need to be prepared to understand that culture of the destination country could be divergent from that of the US
17. Include resources for reporting violations of code of conduct in the field trip guidelines.

### Useful links: (for reference)

<https://diversity.ideo.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Lamont%20Code%20of%20Conduct%202019.pdf>

[https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field\\_work.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field_work.html)

<https://envmodellinggroup.github.io/coc.html>

<https://sites.google.com/site/expmicromechandchar/people/code-of-conduct>