



Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Racism and Inclusivity Conduct for the School of Earth and Space Exploration at Arizona State University

This is what was found by the ASU SESE pod at the School of Earth and Space Exploration (SESE) Arizona State University (ASU) on racism, inclusivity, and conduct during field work, as well as general changes that the pod would like to make.

Avenues to report misconduct

The power dynamic between students and faculty may make reporting misconduct an intimidating process. There should be multiple avenues of redress. Therefore, we propose including students in a voluntary but explicit role in the reporting process. This involves a few things:

Train students to be a resource for others. These students are volunteers who assist in providing support and potentially reporting violations. Volunteers must be available to other students who are in need. Training and active volunteering for this role is a time commitment, so volunteers should receive some form of compensation.

Increase the awareness of peer support with fliers. These fliers can be posted around campus (e.g. bathrooms, hallways, lounges, etc.) with a list of student names who are serving as volunteers.

Actionable items to make geoscience field work more accessible

Provide an inclusive checklist to prepare for field work. People who have little prior experience with the outdoors may find field work intimidating. For example, a student who spent all of their life in an urban setting may not know how to set up a tent or forget "basic" items such as bug spray, sun screen, appropriate clothing, etc. Field work may be less intimidating for new individuals if a comprehensive checklist is provided and tailored for the individual's needs. For example, some students may have dietary restrictions or use a certain type of shampoo.

Update departmental field trips. Faculty are currently working to make departmental field trips more accessible (e.g., Prof. David Williams on NSF grant to make Holey Tour (intro planetary geology field trip) more accessible to students with mobility issues, as well as adding Indigenous land acknowledgments to Holey Tour and Pinacate planetary volcanology field trip.



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Actionable items to promote BIPOC in the geosciences

The lack of diversity in the geosciences was discussed. About 85% of the total number of doctorates awarded in the geosciences were earned by whites in 2016. Asians and hispanic/latinos each have 6% and 5% of geoscience doctorates awarded, respectively. Blacks and Native Americans represent only 1% of geoscience doctorates each (Bernard and Cooperdock, 2018). The lack of diversity among geoscience doctorates may make it difficult for BIPOC to find support, BIPOC role models, and confidence that BIPOC can succeed in the discipline.

Citing papers authored by BIPOC is one way we can further the success of otherwise marginalized scientists. Unfortunately, there are not many BIPOC geoscientists which may make this goal difficult. We highlighted two sources that can address this. [Geoscientists of Color](#) is a public spreadsheet that congregates scholars and entrepreneurs of color. [500 Women Scientists](#) is a “resource for journalists, educators, policy makers and others seeking the expertise of women and gender minorities STEM professionals.”