

# URGEO

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



## URGE Pod Agreement for the Geophysical Institute and College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics / Department of Geosciences

This agreement is between the URGE UAF-Pod and the Director and Dean at the Geophysical Institute (GI) and College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (CNSM) / Department of Geosciences at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Our Unlearning Racism in Geoscience (URGE; [www.urgeoscience.org](http://www.urgeoscience.org)) pod has the following meetings scheduled with the University/Organization Leadership:

- Meeting 1 - Introduction to URGE and Discussion of Pod Goals - Date/Time
  - (list names and titles of Uni./Org. Leadership who will attend meetings)
- Meeting 2 - Invitation for leadership to attend a regular pod meeting - **TBD**
- Meeting 3 - Follow-Up Discussion of Pod Proposal and Actions - **TBD**
  - Schedule additional meetings here to execute plans at organization

We are committed to URGE's primary objectives:

1. Deepen the community's knowledge of the effects of racism on the participation and retention of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) in the Geoscience<sup>1</sup>
2. Use the existing literature, expert opinion, and personal experiences to develop anti-racist practices and strategies<sup>2,3</sup>
3. Share, discuss, and modify anti-racist policies and strategies within a dynamic community network and on a national stage.

We are committed to our pod's objectives:

1. **In collaboration between POD and organizational leadership, we seek to identify problems of racial diversity and inclusivity within the GI and CNSM / Department of Geosciences in both quantitative and qualitative ways.** For instance:
  - a. Seek quantitative and qualitative data (or request implementation of their collection) about recruitment, retention, and graduation of BIPOC undergraduate and graduate students in our organizations, perhaps aided by some form of forum / listening session / anonymous feedback box as outlet specifically for our BIPOC community to help identify areas of concern. This will allow us to see

<sup>1</sup> R. E. Bernard, E. H. G. Cooperdock, No progress on diversity in 40 years. Nature Publishing Group. 11, 1–5 (2018).

<sup>2</sup> <https://notimeforsilence.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.change.org/p/geoscientists-call-for-a-robust-anti-racism-plan-for-the-geosciences>

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where changes or attention could make the most difference and where UAF's geoscience institutions do best and worst in terms of racial equity and inclusion in comparison with other similar institutions.

- b. Utilize the final report of the chancellor's task force for [IDEA](#) (Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility), focusing on data and action items pertaining to racial injustice, including :
    - i. Underrepresentation of BIPOC faculty, staff and students
    - ii. Disproportionate failure at "retaining and graduating students of color" (pg. 2).
  - c. Understand intersectional barriers including:
    - i. Socioeconomic barriers, such as late first paychecks, health insurance gaps between semesters, and the fact that UAF fees are only covered on an advisor by advisor basis (or TA vs. RA). Perhaps assess the expansion of the Deer Oaks Employee Assistance program to BIPOC students (<https://www.alaska.edu/news/hr/july-8-eap-can-help.php>).
2. **We will collaboratively develop communication strategies to raise awareness of these issues.** For instance,
- a. Maintain this pod as a permanent, highly visible space within our organizations to become comfortable talking about and freely discuss issues related to Race and Racism.
  - b. Raise awareness of DEI issues within our organizations through seminars such as "GEOS 4/692 Social Justice Topics in Science", discussions with organization leadership, and publication of deliverables and goals via institutional websites or social media
  - c. Share what we learn within URGE regarding general patterns of how racism persists in geoscience, as well as specific problems seen clearly within the

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GI/CNSM with the rest of GI/CNSM over social media or via newsletter/GI-wide email twice during the semester.

3. **Collaboratively, we will develop an anti-racism Action Plan including methods for measuring and reporting progress.** Below, we are giving an overview of possible actions that the pod and our organizations could work towards:

- a. Mainstream discussions around topics of Racism, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, possibilities include:
  - i. Implement a JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) award that recognizes individuals creating change.
  - ii. Provide or increase financial aid/scholarships for underrepresented students.
  - iii. Implement implicit bias training for members on hiring committees, including faculty recruiting grad students.
  - iv. Implement mandatory annual JEDI training for students/faculty/staff.
  - v. Encourage inclusion of JEDI or Indigenous Knowledge course into undergraduate and graduate curricula
- b. Encourage use of best practices in hiring to increase the pool of non-traditional applicants and assess the benefits of diversity statements as part of faculty hiring packet (see, e.g., <https://ideal.com/diversity-hiring/>)
- c. Join AGU BRIDGE program (<https://www.agu.org/bridge-program>) to ease graduate education access
- d. Create measures of personal and institutional accountability to move towards Anti-Racist environments
- e. Assess how diversity can be better addressed in recruiting geosciences students, from high school to graduate level
- f. Strive for diverse representation in halls of portraits, awards ceremonies, etc.

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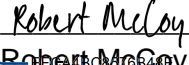


- g. (IDEA Report:) Publicize scholarships and financial aid packages that are geared towards underrepresented groups, e.g. website that lists the various scholarships by category
- h. (IDEA Report:) Revise publications for inclusive language and images, e.g. replace “freshman” with “first year”, pluralize nouns and pronouns, photos of diverse populations, including age and disability

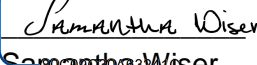
We are committed to pursuing these objectives individually, as a pod, and as an organization.

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Ronni Grapenthin  
 Pod Leader(s)

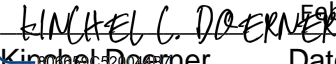
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 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Robert McCoy  
 Director Geophysical Institute

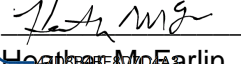
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 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Samantha Wisser

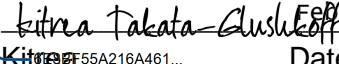
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 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Kinchel Doerner  
 Dean College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

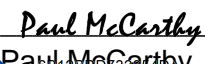
February 17, 2021  
 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Heather McFarlin

February 17, 2021  
 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Kitara Takata-Glushkoff

February 18, 2021  
 Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Paul McCarthy  
 Chair, Department of Geosciences

February 17, 2021  
 Date

### Pod Members:

Anika Pinzner  
Beth Grassi

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## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



Chris Carr  
Christine Waigl  
Dogacan Ozturk  
Emily Fedders  
Emily Cahoon  
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Heather McFarlin  
Jamshid Moshrefzadeh  
Jane Suhey  
Jordan Bishop  
Julia Gestrich  
Karen Spaleta  
Katarina Vance  
Kelly Eagan  
Kitrea Takata-Glushkoff  
Lea Gardine  
Liam Toney  
Lindsey Smith  
Maria Berger  
Megan McGinty  
Nealey Sims  
Pablo Saunders-Shultz  
Ronni Grapenthin  
Samantha Wiser  
Sean Regan  
Skye Kushner

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