

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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### Safety Plan

Created by the graduate student pod at Syracuse University Earth and Environmental Science Department

### Individual Lab Group Requirements

- **Lead informed discussions about antiracism in your lab regularly:** Once a semester, lab groups will be required to read/discuss DEI/Lab/Field work related paper (Ex: Chaudhary and Berhe, 2020; Morales et al. 2020; Martinez-Cola 2020)
- **Amplify voices of BIPOC scientists in your field:** Lab PIs should encourage and promote regular reading and citing of BIPOC research and scholars
- **Address racism in your lab group and field safety guidelines:** Code of conduct must be added to field and lab safety guidelines for all laboratories in HGL
- **Evaluate your lab's mentoring practices:** "BIPOC mentees report racially motivated gatekeeping behaviors by mentors such as being advised not to pursue advanced degrees or prestigious opportunities, receiving little mentorship in areas associated with issues of identity, experiencing tone policing, and being advised to avoid politics (real and perceived)" - How do we report/mitigate this? - refer to code of conduct/bias reporting through DEI/JEDI
  - PIs/Dept should advertise/encourage/provide financial support for students to be involved in these organizations (e.g., Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science, the different national associations and societies for Black scholars, and Black British Professionals in STEM)
- **Support BIPOC in their efforts to organize**
- **Intentionally recruit BIPOC student and staff**
- **Adopt a dynamic research agenda**
- **Advocate for racially diverse leadership in science**
- **Hold the powerful accountable and don't expect gratitude**

### Field Season Requirements

- **Risk Management Plan:** Compile preliminary research for the field region's political and social environments along with discussing individual safety concerns with all group members (i.e. laws, demographics, culture, historical and current events of harassment)

or harm to minorities). Discuss mitigation strategies in the event harassment or discrimination occur.

- **All members of field team undergo bias training before excursion (StopBias)**
- **Address racism in your lab group and field safety guidelines:** Code of conduct must be added to field and lab safety guidelines for all laboratories in HGL
- Provide all individuals going into the field with a physical copy of emergency resources (laminated note cards) - emergency evac plan for ALL types of emergency and safety issues - physical, medical, bias and harassment

Examples and additional Resources:

- Example Safety Plan: (Demery & Pipkin, 2021)  
[www.preprints.org/manuscript/202008.0021/v6](http://www.preprints.org/manuscript/202008.0021/v6)
- Example Code of Conduct: [Basin Research Group](#) (under “Inclusivity and Diversity”)
- [https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field\\_work.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field_work.html)
- <https://ilga.org/maps-sexual-orientation-laws>
- <https://www.adl.org/adl-hate-crime-map> (For USA)

**DRAFT**

**Risk Management Plan for Fieldwork  
Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Syracuse University**

Location:

Primary Investigator:

Team Members:

**1. Preliminary Research**

Research the historical and cultural background of the field site’s region. To support anonymity of team members, prepare and report this to the team before individual meetings.

Risk:	Law:	Cultural Background:	Risk Probability: (low, medium, high)
LGBT member is unsure of cultural views of location	New Mexico has hate crime laws for LGBT. Public facilities required to have a gender neutral bathroom or a single occupancy bathroom.	Has multiple LGBT resources throughout the state. Marriage has been legal since 1978.	low

**2. Individual Concerns**

Hold individual meetings with team members to address any concerns they might have. These could include

- Labor involving heavy lifting, difficult hikes, packing materials, etc.
- Person of color being “othered”
- Student who is transgender is currently transitioning and concerned about access to restrooms

Anonymous form is an acceptable way to collect student concerns.

Risk (If/Then Statement)	Mitigation (Response or Unable to Mitigate)	On-Site Response	Consequences
Verbal harassment (side comments, repeated behaviors, etc.)	Take perpetrators aside to reiterate no tolerance policy. Check in on student to make sure they are feeling ok.	If continues, assign field partners to help remove student from the perpetrators.	Hurt grade, report or pursue action with department

### 3. Removal Plan

Apply standard emergency procedures from safety plans and adjust them to include a removal plan for emergencies involving harassment or assault.

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### **Code of Conduct**

This is not an entire, fully comprehensive code of conduct like the one the university creates. This is meant to be a simpler set of guidelines and rules that lab groups/field groups should follow and reference to create a more inclusive and anti-racist environment.

#### **Statement of Values/Guiding Values:**

List DEI related values and standards that we should follow. Look back at the rules we set for our pod, the department's value's statements and other examples (see comment, the [serc.carleton.edu](http://serc.carleton.edu) page has a great overview of what these codes of conduct should include). What are some topics that are especially important for a successful field experience?

The Department of Earth and Environmental Science values:

- Acknowledgement and respect for diversity in all forms
- Professionalism, honesty, and integrity in all interactions
- Accountability for responsibilities and relationships
- Supportive and inclusive environment
- Collaboration and cooperation to promote learning and development

#### **Individual Responsibilities:**

Go a little more in depth about some of the above values. What are appropriate behaviors? What behaviors are inappropriate? Specify behaviors in the field as well as everyday lab operations.

- Don't be a bystander. if you see a violation of the code of conduct, report it
- In the field (and lab), don't make disrespectful remarks concerning people's disabilities, experiences (i.e. do not compare people's abilities, levels of experience)
- Be aware that even if you may feel safe in an environment/location, other people in your field group may not feel safe so support them
- Familiarize yourself with diversity within group
- Owning mistakes
- Share success, problems, science
- Treat others with respect - cheerleaders
- No toleration of harassment, etc.
- Collaborative not competitive
- Include others/collaborate/cooperate between groups
- Police microaggressions
- No blaming others for something we're all supposed to do
- No exclusion of certain groups/discrimination
- Call out discriminatory/exclusive behavior
- Respect common spaces

Advisor needs to outline responsibilities for what students are responsible for in the lab and create a transparent atmosphere where people can freely talk about others if they are not pulling their weight.

Designate people who are responsible for safety, ordering supplies, buddy system in the lab.

### **Student-Advisor Relationship:**

What values are important for a successful student-advisor relationship? Does this relationship change based on whether you're in the field or in the lab (the answer should probably be no, but you should elaborate on this a bit more)?

- Advisor needs to be aware of the power dynamic between advisor and student
- Knowing that students come from diverse backgrounds with unique strengths and weaknesses
- Specifically in the field - delegate work based on people's strengths, experiences and skills (i.e. people may or may not enjoy car camping and recreational outdoor activities)
- Clear/timely communication on summer funding (and other funding related issues)
- Clarity on time off (requests)
- Check in on mentoring techniques for advisors (who would this be? Tracy?)
- Student check in
- Professionalism
- Honesty in expectations and communication (how often do you meet, dissertation/thesis format and timing, do you need to go to the field, analyze your own samples). Everybody on the same page
- Be tactful and separate what needs to be communicated one-on-one with a student vs at lab meetings, especially in the sense of criticizing
- Different students have different strengths and needs, adapt to the needs of each student (i.e. some require more reminding and supervision to accomplish things).
- Open communications, discuss reasonable expectations for both student and advisor
- Advisor needs to be aware of power dynamic in both lab and field
- Make it clear that the advisor is a resource and confidant for the student

### **Harassment, Discrimination, and Bias:**

Define harassment, discrimination, and bias.

- Discrimination is prejudicial treatment of people including but not limited to professional opportunities, employment, benefits, and evaluations.
- Harassment is unwanted or abusive contact with the purpose to intimidate and demean in personal and professional settings. Sexual harassment includes any form of inappropriate sexual remark or advances and other verbal or physical of a sexual nature.
- Bias is prejudice in favour for or against someone or something that expresses hostility because of real or perceived race, color, creed, religion, sex, gender, national origin, citizenship, ethnicity, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, reproductive health decisions and/or veteran status.

## Reporting harassment, discrimination, and bias tools

The dei resources [website](#) goes over the local reporting tools, as does [Deliverable 2](#). Many of these tools should also be valid for incidents that occur in the field (Title IX coordinator, University Ombuds, national hotlines, etc.)

- [Stop Bias Incident Report](#)
- [EthicsPoint Anonymous Report](#) - allows for follow up with secure access to report post submission.
- University Ombudsman (Neal Prowess) - provides a safe space for graduate students and faculty discuss issues confidentially and provides resources for action
  - [ombuds@syr.edu](mailto:ombuds@syr.edu)
  - 111 Waverly Ave., Suite 215  
315.443.1087
- SU Department of Public Safety (315.443.2224) for emergency text and calls
  - [711@syr.edu](mailto:711@syr.edu)
  - Anonymous Reporting Tip Line (315.443.TIPS (8477))
  - Victim and Witness Support (315.443.1746)
  
- Include a clear communication within department
- What can be reported - clarification

*Unlearning Racism in Geoscience (URGE; [www.urgeoscience.org](http://www.urgeoscience.org)) is a community-wide journal-reading and policy-design curriculum to help Geoscientists unlearn racism and improve accessibility, justice, equity, and inclusion (AJEDI) in our discipline. URGE's primary objectives are to (1) deepen the community's knowledge of the effects of racism on the participation and retention of black, brown, and indigenous people in Geoscience<sup>1</sup>, (2) use the existing literature, expert opinion, and personal experiences to develop anti-racist policies and strategies<sup>2,3</sup>, and (3) share, discuss, and modify anti-racist policies and strategies within a dynamic community network and on a national stage. By meeting these objectives, we hope that Geoscience departments and societies will be able to implement a well-researched crowdsourced group of anti-racist policies.*

