

## **UMaine SMS faculty pod**

### **Session 6 deliverable**

Marine scientists' field work and interaction with the public ranges from weeks at sea to working with people in the fishing and aquaculture industries. All of these settings have more barriers and less safety for people of color than they do for White people.

For deep-sea field work, UNOLS has established safety standards that include annual trainings for all shipboard individuals and a contact person on land that can be reached via email from the ship (in addition to reporting procedures on the ship).

<https://www.unols.org/document/research-vessel-safety-standards-rvss>

Some forms of local field work involves using smaller research vessels that are governed by institutional policies, or fishing vessels or other boats. Particularly in cases where scientists are non-paying guests on fishing vessels, private vessels may be unwelcoming and may provide opportunities for harassment of people of color and women. The forms of harassment and unwelcoming behavior that are experienced by people of color and women are often different, but there are commonalities and intersectionalities. In our academic unit, this URGE session has helped us identify a need to establish clearer policies around use of private vessels. This includes establishing a vetting and reporting procedure through which both good partners and problematic vessels and crew can be identified and avoided. Most insidious are partnerships that are productive for White male faculty and staff but where people of color and women are unwelcome or harassed. More bystander training for supervisors and White people (particularly men) is likely to be helpful.

Similar problems may arise in partnerships with aquaculturists and on-shore fishing industry professionals, so a similar oversight process for looking at local organizations is likely also to be beneficial.

Within research groups, some faculty have begun regular discussions around race and inclusion. Our pod members plan to identify specific topics and readings to help other research groups adopt this practice.

In education, we need more information about the specific effects of field experiences in our program on our students. In particular, we are considering surveying students about the effect of our current field courses on their interest and sense of belonging in field work and marine science and how we can both improve those experiences and minimize harmful experiences.