URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Conversation with Administrators

This is a record of what was prepared for the University of Washington School of Environmental and Forest Sciences (SEFS) Pod meeting with leadership, specifically our department head, Director Dan Brown. Material is based on Pod meetings and deliverables from Sessions 1-5, and distilled by major themes. The Pod chose to focus on formulating questions and discussion topics to prepare for our meeting with leadership for our Session 6 deliverable. Some of our members have volunteered to work on the Safety Plan initiative independently from our Pod meetings, as members of the SEFS DEI Committee and/or Graduate Council.

The Pod Agreement for the UW College of the Environment Academic Leads puts forth the following goals:

Learn from other Pods about their experiences, critical analyses, and strategic priorities
- What were / are the priorities or goals of the CoE Academic Leads Pod in participating in the URGE curriculum?
- The UW SEFS Pod has identified action items that fall under several themes (below), which are reflected in the Pod deliverables. Has the CoE Academic Leads Pod held any action-oriented conversations during Pod meetings, and/or around URGE material?

Foster ongoing discussion on progress towards action plans, potentially including coordination with other URGE Pods
- The UW SEFS Pod has identified discussion questions and action items associated with each of the following themes, which we hope to cover in our meeting.
- Incentivizing engagement across the SEFS Community
    - To date, initiative by the graduate student community has driven much of the change related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the department.
    - Similarly, optional workshops / trainings and active participation in DEI initiatives draws in the same group of SEFS community members.
    - What ways are the School or College leadership considering to incentivize commitment to DEI education and advancement across the entire SEFS community? For example, through hiring and PMT structures, requirements or support for the development of lab-level codes of conduct and community agreements?
    - Has School leadership considered a paid administrative position for someone trained in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion to work toward engaging the entire SEFS community and realizing a community vision? We need to value the time put into these efforts, which would also benefit from specialized personnel.

- Training
  - Education is a continual process that requires ongoing communication and the extension of learning opportunities and self-reflection beyond a single training.
  - What is the long-term / higher level vision for training development and implementation in the School or College? For example, regarding accountability or incentive structures, training facilitator and topic (mentorship / supervisory skills, field and lab work safety, hiring practices, handling complaints and reporting) selection
- Admissions & Diversifying SEFS
  - While working on the Session 5 deliverable, the Pod found that there was little transparency around the graduate student application evaluation process. Can this be remedied, and the appropriate rubric made more publicly available?
  - By removing the GRE requirement, SEFS has taken a step toward more inclusive graduate student admissions practices. However, other major financial barriers remain, specifically the application fee and the gap in pay in the weeks leading up to a student's first paycheck, when they have likely recently spent money to move to Seattle. To what extent can these barriers be addressed at the School level, or can solutions at higher levels (College, UAW 4121 bargaining) be supported by School administrators?