

URGEO

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



This is a draft document of the Safety Plan and Code of Conduct at Washington and Lee University Geology Pod

The Geology Department Code of Conduct

Successful teaching, learning, and research can only occur when students, faculty, and staff feel safe, secure, and supported. We want you to feel comfortable being yourself. We are thus dedicated to a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, socio-economic status, culture, membership in student organizations, and/or religion. We do not tolerate harassment in any form, and we expect all members of the community to conform to the following Code of Conduct:

- All communication, be it online or in person, should be considerate of people from all backgrounds and identities.
 - Are you working at all times to make others feel welcome and comfortable?
 - Do you intervene (or “speak up”) when you observe or hear inappropriate words against others?
- Be kind to others. This includes:
 - being courteous to others and respectful of our differences
 - being mindful of how your actions and language may be perceived by others
 - refraining from using language that is offensive, intolerant, or insensitive to the feelings of others
 - refraining from engaging in gossip, ridicule, or other behavior that makes an individual or group feel unwelcome, ostracized, or unsafe in our community
- Behave professionally. Remember that harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary comments are not appropriate (even when spoken as a “joke”). Harassment includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.
- Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.
- Contribute to discussions in meetings with a constructive, positive approach



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- Be mindful of talking over others when discussing in groups, and be willing to hear out the ideas of others.
- Departmental values extend beyond the Science Center. Always consider our community members and their differing beliefs/cultures/values/experiences.
- We want departmental spaces to feel welcoming for all, like a home away from home. Treat these spaces – including classrooms, labs, the computer room, and vans – respectfully, and keep them clean
- Be respectful of the environment while working in the field, minimizing disturbance and practicing “leave no trace”

Reporting procedures for complaints regarding bias, harassment, microaggressions, and overt racism

- Reports can be made online, anonymously, [here and](#) through the LiveSafe App. Those reports go directly to W&L Public Safety. Students and employees are encouraged to use LiveSafe to report any incident that needs immediate assistance as someone is monitoring the LiveSafeApp 24/7/365. For reports involving prohibited discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct, public safety would notify Lauren Kozak of the report.
- In person reports can go to Lauren Kozak, but also to other individuals. The Policy details the reporting options for [Students](#) and [employees](#). Reports are kept private and only shared with those that need to know to resolve the report.

Procedures for faculty to ensure safe field experiences (modified from Demery and Pipkin, 2020)

- 1) Recognize that people have different levels of experience and confidence in the field (some may be experienced backpackers, while others may have never camped).
- 2) Self-educate on the experience of your team member’s identity and the corresponding risk that they may encounter in the field. *This does not involve asking students to relive trauma surrounding their identity as a source of education.* Rather, use available resources to self-educate.
- 3) Prior to fieldwork, contact relevant institutional offices for risk management on how to best manage risk in the field and identify resources for researchers to identify the social landscape in which the field site(s) is(are) situated and identify potential risks.
- 4) Create a field risk management plan that discusses risk at established field sites. This document should detail potential risks and identify mitigation(s) for that risk. This document should also act as a living document for recording safety incidents. Copies should be carried with fieldworkers on their person as well as left in the workplace/lab.



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- 5) Provide materials to clearly identify students and their purpose (e.g., signs for vehicles and field sites, safety vests, etc.). These items should be provided to students so that their use is easily implemented.
- 6) Have a conversation with all students on the risks and preparations to minimize risk. This can include a statement that certain demographics may be at higher risk, and that the faculty is available to discuss concerns and proactive measures. Educational resources, such as this document, should be made available to all students who can then self-select to engage in a conversation about safety issues surrounding their specific identity(ies).
- 7) Create a time and space to talk to students specifically about fieldwork safety concerns in advance of the field season, and touch base with them to address new concerns. As a reminder, this is an uncomfortable reality and merits the need to establish a space and time for both parties (faculty and students) to be ready and willing to engage in this important discussion.
- 8) Even after education, faculty that do not share the same identity as their students will be unaware of all potential risk to researchers. If students bring up potential or experienced risk, validate their experiences and assist in modifying the project so that they can safely continue working in the field.
- 9) The scale of risk can increase dramatically in an international field site. At minimum, be aware of and abide by any international laws and customs in addition to local foreign laws, current political situations, actual degree of law enforcement, and mandate a conversation with students. Furthermore, this conversation should include allies in the field to discuss any safety concerns that the researcher may not be aware of.
- 10) At established field sites, introduce students (via email or in-person) to the manager of those locations, if they exist. If there are multiple managers, students should be introduced to each manager to minimize any miscommunication that could lead to increased risk.
- 11) When possible, show students established field locations, teach them about the specific concerns of that field location, and inform them of the resources in accordance with established safety plans. The resources should have contact information about field site personnel relevant to research and safety (e.g., contact information of the local police department).
- 12) Assist students in establishing safe housing accommodations before arriving at the field location. A safe and secure housing location includes the following: students are able to secure food, safe travel to and from field sites, and supportive points of contact in the local community.
- 13) Review and agree upon fieldwork and safety plans with students before any fieldwork begins.
- 14) Actively engage with students on how to reorganize fieldwork practices if and when there are restrictions on movement; for example, local ordinances limiting activity (i.e., curfew, stay-at-home orders, etc.).