URGE Management Plan for Stony Brook University (SBU)

Table 1. Overview of SBU URGE draft resources and policies for the Geosciences department (GEO) and the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SoMAS)

Session Deliverable	Deliverable type	Existing Policy or Resource?	Where It Is or Will Be Posted	Review/Update Interval	Training Recommended?	Next Step(see prioritized action plan for further details)
Complaints and Reporting Policy	Resource	compilation / fact sheet	Responsible individuals (GEO/ESS major advisors; GPD) should distribute resource fact sheet to new majors and new grad students	every 2 years	Yes (micro-aggressions; bystander intervention)	Faculty discussion and review of resource; at SoMAS build collaboration with EDI committee first
	University Policy	Yes	Already online	n/a		n/a
	Department Policy	No	n/a	n/a		Faculty and EDI committee discussions of pod recommendations; decide next step, if any
Demographic data	Resource	Yes (Geo); No (SoMAS)	Posted on GEO website; SoMAS Diversity Committee working to post on website soon	every 1-2 years	No	Faculty discussion of pod recommendations; decide next step, if any

Session Deliverable	Deliverable Type	Existing Policy or Resource?	Where It Is or Will Be Posted?	Review/Update Interval	Training Recommended?	Next Step
Guidelines / Policies for Working with Communities of Color	Resource	No	Internal for now	every 2 years	Yes (guest speaker?)	Faculty discussion and review of resource
	Department Policy	No	--	--		Faculty discussion of pod recommendations; decide next step, if any
Admissions and Hiring Policies	Graduate admissions practices and policies	Yes	Graduate School		Yes (implicit bias)	Faculty discussion of pod recommendations; decide next step, if any
	Faculty hiring practices and policies	Yes	CAS Faculty Affairs; SoMAS also follow CAS for now			Faculty discussion of pod recommendations; decide next step, if any
Safety Plan	Resource	No	Internal for now	Every 2 years	Yes (implicit bias; conflict resolution)	Faculty discussion and review of resource; discussion of pod recommendations for building implementations; decide next step, if any
Resource Map	Resource (campus/community resource map)	compilation / fact sheet	Include in graduate handbook; distribute to new faculty	Additions on a rolling basis	No	Faculty discussion and review of resource
	Resource (suggestions for IDPs)	No			No	Faculty discussion and review of resource

Below are additional details for each deliverable described above. Most delivered documents to the URGE leadership included a set of recommendations from the SBU URGE pods for resource and policy development. Those recommendations are listed below in short form. **Recommendations do not necessarily represent consensus view of SBU URGE participants.** Though many of these are proposed changes at the department level, components of each deliverable will also form a set of recommendations to College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)/SoMAS leadership, the Provost, and/or Office of Equity and Access (OEA). Further discussions with interested URGE participants and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) committees are needed to form a prioritized and refined set of recommendations.

Complaints and Reporting Policy – A draft compilation of existing campus resources for reporting discrimination, harassment, accessibility barriers was developed. This should be finalized and distributed to existing department members and new department members each year.

These are proposed modifications to the existing reporting policies (see details in deliverable):
- Establish undergraduate, graduate, and faculty/staff liaison roles within a department that would provide information on institutional policies and procedures to any individual that is looking to submit a complaint or report improper behavior and occurrences.
- Department leadership, with future liaisons and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee, commit with the Stony Brook University Office of Equity and Access to establish a plan to address "lower level" (e.g., unintentional microaggressions) occurrences of discrimination that would otherwise not be addressed by institutional processes.

Demographic Data – Demographic data for Geosciences was compiled and posted on the website. This should be maintained annually. Consider collecting demographic data on program completion.

Working with Communities of Color – A survey of SBU URGE pod members regarding previous practices and experiences in working with communities of color in research was conducted and results were included in the deliverable. A detailed list of best practices and lessons learned was produced. The deliverable should be developed and finalized into a set of guidelines to be distributed to department members to help inform best practices. The following suggestions for future actions or policies were listed. (Please see deliverable for additional recommendations for existing collaborations).

- Construct guidelines for incorporating local Indigenous knowledge into future hypothesis development and testing.
- Conduct education campaigns for scientists to spread awareness about the importance of working with communities of color.

- Develop clear authorship and acknowledgement guidelines for when to recognize the labor provided by local communities.
- Compile a collection of books, articles, and other resources on the history, knowledge systems, and cultures of local Indigenous communities, to use in curricula or in preparation for research collaborations.
- Conduct training on best practices and pitfalls we should avoid when conducting research with communities of color.
- Petition scientific funding agencies (e.g., NSF, NASA) to 1) prevent discrimination against applications that allocate funding towards outreach and 2) create a section on grant applications that allows/requires researchers to describe how they plan on incorporating communities of color in grants applications and to appropriately budget for these goals.
- Work with our university's Community Relations Office to establish and facilitate relationships with the Shinnecock Indian Nation and other local communities of color.
- Update graduate course requirements to allow graduate students to receive credit for policy- or ethics-based courses that cover environmental justice matters so that the next generation of scientists are more aware of how they can better work with communities of color.
- Provide funds (when available) that defray the costs of using research facilities for researchers from minority-serving institutions or underrepresented researchers who have financial need.
- SBU and its departments should implement ways to increase recruitment and retention of Indigenous scientists and scientists of color. Support Indigenous scientists with startup, lab space, and salaries equal to those provided to non-indigenous faculty.
- Department tenure guidelines should consider the quality of relationships built with communities of color when examining publication quantity; building meaningful relationships and projects with local communities takes time.
- Encourage and identify support for communities of color within academia, including mentor networks, cultural resources and mental health resources.

Admissions and Hiring Policies – The deliverable summarized the existing policy and procedures for graduate admissions and faculty hiring.

The following list of suggestions were proposed to improve the graduate recruitment, selection and admissions process:
- Expand graduate student advertisement: e.g. create a virtual fair to allow students to learn about our department remotely; introduce/ strengthen programs with "sister institutions" (e.g. Suffolk County Community College)
- Provide clearer guidelines on the application procedures and run workshops or Q&A sessions if possible.
- Deemphasize undergraduate research for graduate school application when students have worked job(s) during undergraduate, or consider admissions to M.S. program rather than Ph.D. program.

- Only consider research experience/skills that are absolutely necessary for the student's success, precluding those that can be learned during graduate coursework or research.
- Clarify language about GRE requirements on department webpage (e.g. change "not required" to "not accepting")
- Consider introducing interviews in the application review process.
- Waive application fees (funds permitting).
- Use rubrics to evaluate candidates. Use contextualized review to evaluate candidates.
- Provide transparency in the review process.
- Remove the applicant names during the review process (note: this conflicts with the above suggestion to introduce interviews in the application process; perhaps these suggestions are meant for different stages of the review process).
- Add a question to the graduate application asking "what obstacles have you overcome?" to allow students to disclose/ emphasize additional aspects about themselves. Better consider the adversities applicants have faced in pursuit of their career as an asset that will demonstrate their persistence and tenacity. Better recognize the transferability of traditionally non-scientific skills.
- Consider how we could introduce a pre-doctoral jumpstart program that will help prepare students, who were not afforded the opportunities to gain adequate instruction and research experience, for a graduate program.

The following list of suggestions were proposed to improve the <u>faculty recruitment and hiring process</u>:

- Foster collaboration with minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to increase our department's visibility among BIPOC researchers
- Highlight the diversity of SBU's student body (graduate and undergraduate) and the strides our department is taking towards increasing BIPOC representation and creating a more inclusive environment.
- Take advantage of every opportunity to apply to the CAS "IDEA" program to hire BIPOC postdoctoral researchers that transform into tenure track faculty positions after 2 years.

Safety Plan – The deliverable summarized perceived barriers of access for BIPOC students in terms of physical safety, on campus and in the field. It also provided suggestions for labs to develop a Code of Conduct and a process for reporting violations. Existing campus resources for relevant trainings were listed. The following recommendations were suggested:

- SBU should provide self-defense trainings with alternative agencies besides the University Police.
- Review the necessity of existing alarm systems for rooms in the ESS building.
- Accessibility of the building for studying purposes after hours must be considered whenever future revisions of the building safety are

done. We recommend having study areas that are both accessible after hours (by key or key card), free of alarms, and have protocols in place for not having police involvement without real cause. Have and disseminate a contact list of other entities that can be called to address minor issues before involving University Police.

- University Police presence within the department should be limited to specific causes. Establish protocols for safe student-faculty-staff interactions with University Police when they are conducting foot patrols of the ESS building after hours. Establishing such protocols may require dialog with University Police leadership. Any dialog with University Police on this matter should be focused on the safety of students, particularly BIPOC students, and maintaining accessibility to the department workspaces.
- Field risk assessment and management plans: All department members who host or participate in class field trips create a field risk assessment and management plan that is shared with students. The deliverable provides useful suggestions for how to create such a plan. Note: this also applies to off-campus trips to residential areas.
- Safety vests or other visible identification is recommended for all field trips.

Resource Map – This deliverable includes two components: (1) suggested components of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with examples, and (2) a campus/department/discipline resource list for students. An IDP is recommended to be developed by the mentor-mentee pair, and updated at different stages of the student's career. The resource map should be finalized and distributed to graduate students and new faculty.

Below is a suggested prioritization of actions, based on ease of implementation and perceived level of immediate need.

1. Finalize resource map and complaints/reporting fact sheet to distribute to new grad students and faculty in the early fall.

2. Discuss need for field risk assessments with faculty and order departmental safety vests for classes and fieldwork (unless they already exist?). Draft example field management plan that can be tailored for location/type of work.

3. Begin drafting finalized version of prioritized recommendations for CAS/Provost/OEA discussions; draw from URGE deliverables but refine. This will be done in consultation with Geosciences EDI committee and interested URGE participants.

4. Determine whether demographic info on program completion is available.

5. Discuss suggestions for grad admissions procedures with faculty; determine what can/should be implemented after investigating

best practices.

6. Faculty discussion of suggestions for implementing reporting liaisons; determine what can/should be implemented after investigating best practices. EDI committee discussion of initiating/proposing a university-wide plan for "lower level" (e.g., unintentional microaggressions) occurrences of discrimination towards any person (i.e., student-student, faculty-student, student-faculty).

7. Discuss building safety suggestions with faculty and building manager.

8. Faculty briefing of the utility of individual development plans; provide examples and encourage adoption.

9. Faculty briefing of suggestions for faculty hiring; think about long term strategies.

10. EDI committee and URGE participant review of suggestions under "Working with Communities of Color"; prioritize and focus. Think about long term strategies.

Status updates

Some of the above deliverables are already close to finalization and will be announced through email when finalized and distributed. Some actions require refinement through further discussions with EDI committee and interested URGE participants before the next steps should be implemented. Some actions require faculty input and discussion as the next step; we propose that the outcome of those discussions be announced via email messaging or a "town hall" style announcement.