



### URGE Management Plan for Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI)

This document provides a summary of deliverables (i.e., policy recommendations) developed by the WHOI Interdisciplinary pod as part of the Unlearning Racism in Geoscience (URGE) curriculum. Full details on the following policy recommendations can be found in the accompanying deliverables, which are archived here: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1laK5yWALZ\\_xdW2-GKUAsgGm1\\_xS0qzj?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1laK5yWALZ_xdW2-GKUAsgGm1_xS0qzj?usp=sharing)

**Table 1:** Overview of recommended policy updates

Deliverable	Existing Policy or Resource?	Initial Point of Contact(s)	Where It Is or Will Be Posted	Review/Update Interval	Racial Risk Assessment?	Training Recommended?	Approval, Check, and/or Consequence
Complaints and Reporting Policy	Yes, but requires updates	Seth Zippel, Pete Barry	On website	No regular review at present. Recommend every 2 years	Not planned	Yes	Not relevant to our pod
Demographic Data	No	Maggie Johnson, Eily Allan	Internal only	Recommend every 2 - 10 years	Recommended	No	Not relevant to our pod
Policies for Working with Communities of Color	No	Michael Fox, David Bekaert	Post on organization website	Recommend every 2 years	Yes	Yes	Approval and Consequence
Admissions and Hiring Policies	Yes	Alan Seltzer, Pablo Canales, Andy Cross	Internal currently	Recommend annually	Recommended	Yes	Approval
Safety Plan	Some	Anya Brown, Shannon Valley	Internal currently	Annually, but also after any major reported incidents	Not planned	Yes	Approval and Consequence
Resource Map	No	Danielle Ramos, Eily Allan	Post on organization website	Additions on a rolling basis	Not planned	No, not staff-wide but only with HR	Approval

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## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- **Agreement** - To facilitate DEI efforts at WHOI, we invite and strongly encourage those in leadership roles at WHOI to engage in conversation with pod members designated as Initial Point of Contact(s) (see table above) for questions regarding policy modifications/implementation. Contact details for the Initial Point of Contact(s) are provided below.

Conversations regarding race and racism can be difficult and emotionally taxing. To promote open and honest communication, all conversations between pod members and WHOI leadership must adhere to the following agreement (see Deliverable 1):

- Judgment free zone -- WHOI community members should feel free to express their opinions and thoughts without fear of judgment or retaliation;
  - Listen actively, speak respectfully;
  - We may not always agree, but must always be open to new perspectives;
  - All conversations will remain confidential, unless permission is given otherwise. Permission must be given on a case-by-case basis.
- **Pod Guidelines** - Pod members are committed to helping implement recommended policy changes. We will work with other WHOI pods (and pods based at other scientific institutions in the Woods Hole area, as appropriate) to refine and align our DEI policy recommendations. We will then circulate a unified plan and detailed recommendations (i.e., deliverables) among appropriate members of WHOI leadership, including the President and Director, DDVPSE, Department Chairs, APO, the CDI committee, and the incoming Chief DEI Officer (CDEIO).
  - **Complaints and Reporting Policy** - Links to existing institution-wide reporting policies and codes of conduct are provided in the Session 2 deliverable. In general, these policies are outdated and are missing a lot of important detail. For example, the webpage containing WHOI's reporting policy was last updated in 2011 (created in 2003). The reporting procedure itself is unclear, particularly in situations where individuals do not feel comfortable speaking with their direct supervisor(s) or department chair-- individuals can report to Kathi Benjamin (HR) but this is not stated in the reporting policy. External reporting bodies can also be contacted (e.g., KGA), but some of these are obsolete (e.g., OpenLine -- see Deliverable 2). There are also no clear designated points of contact for informal advice. We strongly recommend that the current reporting policies are reviewed and updated to provide clearer guidance on reporting.

In addition to the existing reporting policies and codes of conduct, we recommend that WHOI require PIs (those in management/ supervisory roles) to develop individual lab policies outlining rules regarding harassment/discrimination and providing reporting guidance. Kathi Benjamin has requested that PIs forward all lab policies to HR for review.

There is also a lack of accountability and transparency in WHOI reporting. Current policies state that offending individuals may be subject to *“disciplinary actions, which can include counseling, warnings, transfers, suspensions, reductions in pay or duties, and termination of employment”*, but it is unclear who makes these decisions, whether



complaints against repeat offenders are escalated, and whether disciplinary action is, indeed, enforced or upheld. We recommend that additional resources be allocated to HR so that 1) complaints can be tracked more thoroughly, and 2) reporting rates/data can be collected and made publicly available (with sensitive information anonymized).

- **Demographic Data** - Regular reporting of demographic data is essential for accountability and monitoring progress as we work to make WHOI a more diverse and inclusive workplace. There is currently an extreme lack of transparency in both present day and historical demographics at WHOI (see Deliverable 3). Demographic data is collected to some extent, but these data are not freely available to either the public or WHOI employees (to maintain anonymity of minority respondents). At minimum, we recommend that WHOI produce/publish its policy for collecting demographic data online, with added information on when/how WHOI employees may obtain copies of such data. We recommend that WHOI reference diversity best practices at peer institutions who are successfully dealing with the issue of small numbers and anonymity. If possible, HR should consider releasing demographic data on a regular (e.g., biennial or decadal) basis.
- **Policies for Working with Communities of Color** - While it is difficult to design a blanket policy for working with communities of color--as these interactions are unique and have variable challenges--we recommend that WHOI require PIs to develop a plan/policy before engaging with communities of color. General guidelines for such plans may include the following (see Deliverable 4 for more detail): emphasizing decency/humility as essential attitudes; authorship/acknowledgement guidelines when working with community leaders and members; increasing accountability (e.g., monitoring) for outreach and broader impacts components of funded projects, to ensure that PIs are completing their proposed broader impacts activities.
- **Admissions and Hiring Policies** - Over the past couple of years, efforts have been made to make hiring more equitable at both the faculty and student levels. With additional monitoring of demographic data (see above), it should be possible to see how these changes have impacted the diversity of new hires. However, efforts and changes to hiring policies have not yet been formally adopted and vary from department to department. At all levels, we recommend that WHOI reevaluate its definition of "merit". Standard metrics (e.g., grades, GRE scores, H-indices, impact factors) are poor indicators of a candidate's quality and potential, and are often biased by a candidate's privilege or relative lack thereof (e.g., access to financial support, instrumentation, mentoring). Some (if not all) departments have begun to adopt rubrics that balance quantitative and qualitative indicators of "success"/"potential" -- we recommend that these rubrics be standardized and adopted among all departments. However, moving away from a metrics-based hiring model invites potential for discrimination based on implicit biases. Mandatory implicit bias training has been trialed among faculty search committees over the past year (with optional attendance for all other WHOI employees), but job applicants interact with many other members of the WHOI community during interviews, and all department members ultimately have an equal voice in the hiring process. We therefore recommend that annual/biennial implicit bias training be made mandatory for all staff scientists. To further minimize (affinity) bias, we recommend that search committees be as diverse as possible.

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## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Given the relative “whiteness” of WHOI and the local Woods Hole/ Cape Cod/ New England area, new BIPOC hires are susceptible to feelings of isolation and alienation. To complement efforts aimed at making hiring/admissions more equitable, we also recommend that changes be made to ensure the retention of new BIPOC hires, by making WHOI a more inclusive and welcoming workplace. To support and provide a sense of belonging to BIPOC members of the WHOI community, we encourage WHOI to provide institutional/financial support for affinity groups, based either solely at WHOI, or based regionally--for example, an affinity group for geoscientists working within 100 miles of WHOI (including MBL, MIT, Brown, URI, Harvard, Northeastern, BC, BU, etc.). To help build a critical mass of BIPOC scientists at WHOI (to aid retention, while also attracting new BIPOC job applicants), we further encourage cluster hires aimed at establishing a cohort of BIPOC scientists/engineers.

- **Safety Plan** - WHOI scientists engage in a wide variety of research activities, in the laboratory, in the field, and on cruises. Rather than detailing a series of specific rules for all research groups to adopt, we instead recommend a series of topics for all PIs and research groups to discuss in the development of their safety plans and codes of conduct. We recommend that WHOI make it mandatory for PIs to develop safety plans and codes of conduct for their research groups. A full, detailed list of recommended safety plan and code of conduct topics is provided in Deliverable 6, but includes:
  - *Field/remote work* - Risk assessments and contingency plans for working in remote (and possibly dangerous) locations.
  - *Harassment* - Lab safety plans should include policies and resources for reporting harassment (at present these policies are unclear -- see above).
  - *Reporting* - Policies for reporting accidents, incidents, conflicts, and harassment
  - *Accessibility* - steps for accommodating the different capabilities of research group members, to improve accessibility and inclusivity
  - *Credentialing* - guidelines for wearing official identification/paraphernalia (as BIPOC scientists are often singled out by campus security, for example)
  - *Research/travel expenses* - procedures for reimbursement and paying expenses out of pocket
  - *Alcohol* - expectations for group socializing
  - *Outreach obligations* - whether/when/how lab members are expected to engage in outreach/service activities
  - *Accountability* - procedures and consequences for code of conduct violations by group members (including the PI)
  - *Expectations on time/availability* - whether group members are expected to be physically present on campus or in lab at specific times
  - *Mentorship* - expectations for mentoring, in regards to both research, navigating academia, and mental wellbeing
  - *Mental health* - resources available for maintaining mental health

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## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- **Resource Map** - Many community resources at WHOI are poorly documented and known only via word of mouth. To make WHOI a more welcoming place, we recommend that new hires/students be provided with a community resource map as part of their onboarding process. Together, the various Woods Hole based URGE pods have compiled a detailed resource map (see Session 7 deliverable) outlining:
  - *Core work resources* - code of conduct, reporting policy, equipment inventories/locations
  - *Community support and mental health resources* - guidance on finding accommodation, counseling services, buddy programs and affinity groups, social groups, events calendars, mailing lists, working groups, local businesses (e.g., gyms, barber shops, etc.)
  - *Skillset support resources* - Driving, navigation, swimming/SCUBA, first aid, coding
  - *Professional development resources* - workshops, networking, web design, graphic design, internal funding/fellowships, field/cruise opportunities, department seminar series
  - *Outreach resources*

Note that not all of these resources are easy to find on WHOI internal webpages, while many others are outdated.



**Table 2:** Contact details for the Initial Point of Contact(s) indicated in Table 1

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation	Job Title	Email	WHOI Department
Alan	Seltzer	WHOI	Assistant Scientist	alan.m.seltzer@gmail.com	Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry
Anya	Brown	WHOI	Postdoctoral Scholar	brown.anya@gmail.com	Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry
David	Bekaert	WHOI	Postdoctoral Scholar	dbekaert@whoi.edu	Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry
Maggie	Johnson	WHOI	Postdoctoral Scholar	magjohnson@gmail.com	Department of Biology
Michael	Fox	WHOI	Postdoctoral Scholar	mikefox08@gmail.com	Geology and Geophysics
Peter	Barry	WHOI	Assistant Scientist	barrypete@gmail.com	Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry
Seth	Zippel	WHOI	Assistant Scientist	zippelsf@gmail.com	Applied Ocean Physics & Engineering
Sherlynette	Castro	MBL	Postdoctoral Scientist	sherlynette.castro@gmail.com	N/A
Eily	Allan	UW	Postdoctoral Scholar	eallan@uw.edu	Formerly AOP & E
Andrew	Cross	WHOI	Assistant Scientist	across@whoi.edu	Geology and Geophysics
Pablo	Canales	WHOI	Associate Scientist w/ Tenure	jpcanales@whoi.edu	Geology and Geophysics
Shannon	Valley	WHOI	Postdoctoral Scholar	shannon.valley@whoi.edu	Geology and Geophysics
Danielle	Ramos	WHOI	Postdoctoral Scholar	d.santiago.ramos@gmail.com	Geology and Geophysics