

URGE Demographic Data
Department of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences
Brown University

This is what was found by Brown DEEPS Pod at Brown University on demographic data (public and internal facing) as well as stated goals for representation, and/or proposals to collect and report demographic data.

Demographics in DEEPS

The demographics of undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff is collected by Brown University administration and is shared annually with DEEPS leadership. All demographic information is self-reported from individuals and if the individual chooses not to report then their person does not contribute to the collective reported numbers (not in the numerator or denominator). Furthermore, international student demographics are not included in demographics reporting in an effort to make demographic data comparable to U.S. demographic averages for all U.S. citizens. It is standard practice for DEEPS leadership to then evaluate the reported demographic information in the context of a faculty-wide meeting where these data are compared year-to-year to see whether or not diversity goals are being met. Confidentiality of students is a requirement that must be met, which due to the low number of students admitted to DEEPS in any given year, means that it is challenging to properly anonymize, which limits the number of folks within the DEEPS community that has access to high-level information. Therefore, this information is only shared at a faculty-wide level and is not readily available to students or the general public.

Diversity Goals for DEEPS

Specific goals for achieving greater diversity among students and faculty are outlined in the [DEEPS Departmental Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan \(DIAP\)](#). Annual summaries outlining progress towards these diversity goals have been produced and shared by the Departmental Inclusion and Action Committee (DIAC) for academic years [2018-2019](#) and [2019-2020](#). These documents are shared public on the Brown DEEPS website under the [Diversity and Inclusion](#) tab.

It is the long-term goal of DEEPS to increase the diversity among its undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty to make parity to national demographic averages. Numerical criteria are not enumerated in the DIAP, in part because of the “pipeline problem” in geosciences. However, a practical goal of DEEPS is to ensure that the percentage of students from historically underrepresented groups (HUGs) admitted to the program either matches or exceeds the percentage of HUGs applied to the grad school. Specific numbers are not publicly shared, but have been trending from the single percentages to low double-digit percentages over the last few years, likely due to a number of DEEPS initiatives like removing the GRE from grad school application evaluations. In the most recent application cycle, DEEPS is proud to have admitted one of its most diverse cohort of students that represents an increase in percentage of HUGS from the previous year. Regarding the standard hiring processes, DEEPS

does not receive demographic information on applicants. This information is sometimes gleaned from shortlisted applicant's curriculum vitae and is considered in the overall selection process.

Demographic Highlights

Highlights of the aggregated demographics data shared in the most recent DIAC report (2019-2020 academic year) gives the following information:

- Low numbers (relative to U.S. averages) of potential graduate students from HUGs made up about ~9% of all applicants. This is compared to the 8% of HUG individuals who received Ph.D.s in the geosciences in the same year.
- Female students made up approximately 53% of all applicants.
- Of the 17 students admitted this year
 - 47% identified female
 - 12% were HUG individuals
 - 12% were international
- Of those who matriculated
 - 71% yield
 - 58% identified female
 - 17% were international
 - 17% were HUG individuals

DEEPS POD Policy Recommendations

Regarding demographics and reporting, the DEEPS POD has made the recommendation to DEEPS leadership to share annual anonymized demographics data on all applicants, admitted students, and matriculated student with the DIAC to have a more focused investigation into the biases, barriers, and other forms of discrimination that might be manifested in these numbers. This will be in addition to the regular faculty-wide discussions that are carried out already, but at a lower level. Additionally, we recommend to our leadership to collect this information within the department through self-reporting. This is in response to the sometimes skewed and incomplete data DEEPS receives from the University that may not accurately reflect the true demographics within DEEPS. Due to the relatively low number of students that are typically admitted to DEEPS every year, it is recognized that publicly sharing demographic data in some cases may lead to a breach of confidentiality. We therefore encourage DEEPS leadership to think about ways to anonymize demographics data in a way that can be shareable on the departmental website.