
URGE Safety Plan for USD's EOSC Department

Our department proposes two field safety plans: 1) A set of guidelines for *faculty* to prepare for either class field trips or field research with students, and 2) field activity guidelines to be distributed to students before any class field trips or student research involving field work. The latter was based on existing guidelines that have been modified with our ideas from our URGE discussions (see end of this document). We provide ideas on our plan to develop the former below.

Ideas for USD EOSC Faculty Field Guidelines

- This document should be a resource that should be consulted by faculty before leading any field trip in one of their courses or starting fieldwork with new research students or at a new location. This document will provide a list of things to consider and review.
- Field sites should first be visited by faculty before bringing students to the location. When visiting the field site for the first time, faculty should assess the risk for students, particularly considering students of color, students with disabilities, and other student groups for whom the risk may be higher. If the field site is new to the faculty member, they should consult with others who have used this field site before to better assess any risks when possible. For established field sites that are used regularly in classes, all faculty members who teach these courses should discuss the potential risks before the field trip.
- Risk for these established field sites used in courses should be re-assessed regularly. For recurring field sites, solicit anonymous feedback from students in these courses on their experiences and any safety concerns they had to help address safety issues.
- With your class (if a field trip) or with your research students, clearly discuss what the students should expect on the specific field outing. Avoid assuming that students have prior experience in the field or in this particular field setting. Especially consider aspects of the environment that may provide some level of anxiety or discomfort to students. Invite students to come and talk with you if they have any concerns at all.
- Carefully review the departmental field safety guidelines with students, including any additional guidelines that are specific to your field site.
- Make sure to collect the names and emergency contact information for all students participating in the field activity.
- For more extensive class field trips, can we arrange to always bring along someone that has wilderness safety training?
- Develop an extraction plan/protocols to deal with potential accidents where emergency care is needed. When visiting field sites with no cell reception, make sure to bring an alternate way to reach out in an emergency situation (e.g. new Zoleo device for our department that works even when there is no reception).



- Consider that international students may have additional safety concerns when going into the field. USA requires international students/scholars to have their travel documents with them at all times. This may mean that international students at USD will probably need to apply for visas when going on trips to other countries. For trips to/from the desert from/to San Diego this is important as there are immigration checkpoints (you don't want to have students deported because of this).

Revised Departmental Field Safety Plan:

**UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO
Environmental and Ocean Sciences**

FIELD ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

- 1. Footwear with closed toes and heels (i.e., no sandals) are required on all field excursions (with the exception of sandy beach related activities); shoes with smooth leather soles are not advised. Otherwise, be sure to dress appropriately relative to the weather and as per the specific guidelines in your lab syllabus.**
- 2. Field trips will utilize USD vehicles when possible. If private cars are used, carpooling will be highly encouraged. The instructor will indicate when private vehicles may be allowed.**
- 3. Whether traveling to or from a field location in a USD or private vehicle, on or off road, seat belts must always be worn.**
- 4. Students with any special challenges or concerns should consult with their instructor prior to going into the field. These include such things as allergies, asthma, diabetes, sensitivities, physical challenges, etc. Students should be prepared for going into the field by having appropriate medications, water, sunscreen, etc. If you are at all unsure of proper equipment or things that you may need, do not hesitate to ask your instructor.**



5. Unless instructed otherwise, stay close and remain attentive to your instructor for guidance safely through the field. Stay with at least one other student from the class (or instructor/graduate assistant) at all times.
6. Stay on established paths or trails at all times unless instructed to do otherwise. Always utilize the route indicated by your instructor.
7. Be alert! Watch your step! Don't run! Familiarize yourself with the appearance of poison oak, rattlesnakes, jellyfish, rays, sharks, etc., and, if spotted, alert your instructor and those around you.
8. Be respectful of your environment! Stay on paths whenever possible so as not to disturb the geology or groundcover. Some environments and their inhabitants are extremely sensitive and require long periods of time to recover from disturbance. Keep an appropriate distance for any biota, living or dead, so as not to disturb them. It is important not to touch, collect, drink, or eat any plants, animals, or water without specific clearance. Besides disturbing the environment, most plants and animals are protected in California from collection, some may be threatened or endangered, unpleasant, cause discomfort, or be poisonous or toxic. "Take only pictures, leave only footprints."
9. If you are having a problem or get into trouble, inform your instructor immediately!

Additional Guidelines For Student Research in the Field

10. Before going into the field, you must have first visited your field site with your research supervisor or other faculty member in the department. You should have a discussion about any additional risk or safety concerns specific to that field site.
11. All students must be in groups of two or more when in the field. Anytime you plan to go in the field you must inform your research supervisor or another faculty member of your plans.



- 12. Always carry credentials when going into the field, including photo ID and any permits if applicable.**

- 13. If at any time you feel unsafe while participating in field work, you should contact your research supervisor to discuss ways to modify the project.**

- 14. Prior to any activity using the departmental boats, a float plan (with the names and contact information for all individuals who will be on board) must be completed by the supervising faculty member and submitted to the EOSC lab manager prior to departure. Plans must be made for an approved USD EOSC boat operator (see departmental boat policy). The EOSC lab manager should be informed once you have returned.**

- 15. Prior to diving activities as a USD related function, a photocopy of SCUBA certification must be submitted to your supervising faculty member. A dive plan must be submitted to and approved by your supervising faculty member. A copy of the dive plan should be kept in the office of the EOSC lab manager prior to departure, and the EOSC lab manager should be informed once you have returned.**