

Field Safety Plan

Developed by:

Plant & Environmental Informatics Lab (& Friends!) Pod at the University of California, Davis

Resources provided by our institution on Field Safety

- For general information on UC Davis Field Safety
<https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/units/ehs/research/field>
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, this is the checklist for field work planning.
<https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/5f8411sbl3z54mdnkv51q0a9lcodh08x>
- To find information on recent guidelines during COVID phases
<https://research.ucdavis.edu/covid-19-research-resources/>
- All field work will have a custom field safety plan. The template can be found here.
<https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/units/ehs/research/field/planning>
- There are standard operating procedures (SOP) set up for researchers working alone in laboratories on campus. This can be found here.
<https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/news/support-researchers-working-alone>

There is currently no SOP for field researchers working alone. Given that most field work often requires a minimum of two people at any given time, this is not necessary. If researchers will work alone, strict check-in procedures will be listed in the Field Safety Plan.

Example Field Safety Plan

- An example from our lab can be found here. In this field work, the site is located within Davis, in a gated field site owned and operated by UC Davis.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ae_z9zCANE68PW0GzkTWKD1VGMQq_CW-/view?usp=sharing

Currently, there is no information at UC Davis on a racial risk assessment or how to write one. The field work in our lab is based at UC Davis owned and operated sites, and UC Davis has strict anti-racist action plans (<https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/anti-racism-actions>). If working at a UC Davis facility or site, all people have a right to feel safe. The lab will eventually conduct field work outside of Davis and will write custom field safety plans for it. Prior to departing for the field, we will create a racial risk assessment under the guidance of URGE and our university. This risk assessment will be created under the guise of Demey et al., 2021:

Prior to a field expedition, we will:

Talk with colleagues and supervisors about the risks, preparations to minimize risk, and reporting mechanisms. Be aware that the conversation will likely be difficult and will

require mental and emotional readiness by both parties. If a supervisor is dismissive of this conversation, individuals should be aware that they can and should reach out to additional mentors, institutional or industry advocates (see resources below for reporting information).

Understand that the scale of risk can depend on the country in which the fieldwork is conducted (for example, elements of identity such as sexual orientation may be criminalized). At minimum, be aware of and abide by any international laws and customs in addition to local foreign laws, current political climate, actual degree of law enforcement, and mandate a conversation between researcher and supervisor to establish an emergency contingency plan.

Contact others (especially those who share an at-risk identity) that have previously used a field site at a location where there is a history of risk. It is recommended that researchers document all known cases of risk at that location.

Take advantage of training opportunities to increase field safety and promote awareness (for example, self-defence courses, first aid, safety aids and cultural history courses about the location of the field site).

Know who manages the field site(s) and inform the field managers when and where you will be at those locations.

Introduce yourself to the neighbours surrounding the field property, or leave a short note informing neighbours about research being conducted at nearby locations and who will be conducting the research. It is advisable to also include contact information, preferably information that clearly demonstrates affiliation with the research institution to provide additional credibility.

Engage in fieldwork with another person, when possible. When this is not possible, have a point of contact (preferably the supervisor) who is aware of your whereabouts and expected schedule on a given day. A written communication plan that gives notice of field plans is another way to maintain communication with a point of contact.

Always carry credentials in case someone challenges why you are at the field site. These include photo identification (driver's license, passports, institution identification) and relevant permits. Any additional form of identification that clearly demonstrates affiliation with the research institution can also be helpful (that is, university apparel, institution bumper stickers or car magnets, and so on).

If at any time you feel unsafe, you should contact your supervisor to discuss ways to modify the project. While supervisors may work closely with researchers, they often do so outside of the field site, and therefore may not know of the risks and dangers encountered therein. It is paramount that at-risk individuals advocate for themselves.

To report an incident or unsafe conditions, people can contact Troy Magney(PI), Karin Deal(Plant Sciences Safety Manager) or report online using:

<https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/report-concern>.

Additionally, field workers can report incidents of discrimination to

<https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/how-do-i/report-incident>.

And field workers who have issues with their working conditions and perhaps don't feel heard by their PI may report their concerns to the campus ombudsperson who can help handle issues

<https://ombuds.ucdavis.edu/>

Our lab's Code of Conduct is below:

Code of Conduct

The primary goal of this lab is to make you feel safe, secure, and supported. We are a team. Academics get judged – consciously or subconsciously – not just on the work they do, but also on the work of the people and groups they are associated with. As such, we should all be supportive of one another. We will confront and reject all manifestations of discrimination, including those based on race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, age, visible and non-visible disability, nationality, sexual orientation, citizenship status, veteran status, religious/non-religious, spiritual, or political beliefs, socio-economic class, status within or outside the university, or any of the other differences among people which have been excuses for misunderstanding, dissension or hatred. Diversity, equity and inclusion have benefits to us all (see section on DEI below). The more diverse set of backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and ideas we can collectively draw on the stronger we are. Importantly, the benefits of diversity and equality cannot be fully achieved without creating an inclusive environment. To this end, we uphold all members of the lab to the following code of conduct:

- All communication, including over #slack, emails, in-person or over zoom will be appropriate for professional audiences.
- Harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated, period.
- 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, sustained disruption of discussions, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.
- Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate at any time, whether directed at an individual or to the broader group.
- Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.
- Disagreements will occur. Be sure to listen to the other's side and be respectful. This includes things like 'mansplaining.' Or talking down or talking over to any member of the lab group.
- Contribute to discussions in meetings with a constructive, positive approach

- Everyone here is smart. There is no need to prove yourself. Instead, be nice.
- The success of the individual is only as strong as the collective success of the team.

Troy will discuss the Code of Conduct with lab members who violate these rules, no matter how much they contribute to the lab, i.e. visiting scholars, undergraduates, etc. If inappropriate behavior persists after this initial discussion, formal processes - in line with UC Davis's policies (see below) - will commence. To report an issue, please contact Troy; all communication will be treated as confidential. Be aware that for many issues, your PI may not be legally allowed to discuss issues with you. If this is the case, Troy will refer you to HR processes below.

<https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/how-do-i/report-incident>

<https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/report-concern>

<https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/anti-racism>

<https://www.ucdavis.edu/campus-life/wellness-safety/emergency>

Training Offered for Fieldwork

Field safety classes (<https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/training/campus-environment>):

- Heat Illness Prevention (40 minutes)
 - Requirement: Mandatory
 - Training frequency: Annual
 - <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/training/heat-illness-prevention>
- Safe Travel (5 minutes)
 - Requirement: Optional
 - <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/training/risk-management/safe-travel>
- Sprains and Strains (30 minutes)
 - Requirement: Optional
 - <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/training/sprains-and-strains>
- Cold Stress (30 minutes)
 - Requirement: Optional
 - <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/training/cold-stress>
- Greenhouse Safety (75 minutes)
 - Requirement: Project depending
 - <https://greenhouses.caes.ucdavis.edu/greenhouse-safety>
- Wilderness First Aid (8 hour or 16 hour)
 - Requirement: Varies
 - <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/units/ehs/research/field/training-request>
 - <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/units/ehs/research/field/training>
- Safe driver awareness training
 - Requirement: Mandatory if driving 10% or more of work time
 - <https://facilities.ucdavis.edu/fleet-services/safe-driver>

Miscellaneous information: <https://safetyervices.ucdavis.edu/units/ehs/research/field/planning>

