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## **URGE Pod Agreement for University of Tennessee, Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences**

**Unlearning Racism in Geoscience** (URGE; [www.urgeoscience.org](http://www.urgeoscience.org)) is a community-wide program, recently funded by the National Science Foundation, to help geoscientists unlearn racism and improve accessibility, justice, equality, diversity, and inclusion (AJEDI) in our discipline. The Geosciences have been and still remain the least diverse STEM field.

URGE objectives are to:

- 1) Deepen the community's knowledge of the effects of racism on the participation and retention of black, brown, and indigenous people in Geoscience<sup>1</sup>,
- 2) Use the existing literature, expert opinion, and personal experiences to develop anti-racist policies and strategies<sup>2,3</sup>, and
- 3) Share, discuss, and modify anti-racist policies and strategies within a dynamic community network and on a national stage. By meeting these objectives, URGE hopes that Geoscience departments and societies will be able to implement a well-researched crowdsourced group of anti-racist policies.

The URGE curriculum is designed around bi-weekly readings and interviews organized into eight sessions. Each week, groups of individuals, assembled as 'pods,' discuss the material and develop a series of deliverables that are submitted to URGE. The purpose of deliverables is to hold groups accountable, as actions are better at moving the needle than performative work. In mid-January, 2021, members of the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences initiated a 'pod' (U of Tennessee), and have been meeting weekly using resources provided on the URGE website.

One of the deliverables is to develop a leadership agreement<sup>4</sup> for the **U of Tennessee Pod** in the **Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences** at the **University of Tennessee**.

Our Pod is committed to URGE's primary objectives, listed above, and is also committed to specific objectives within the Department:

- 1) Discuss and assess the racial justice, equity, and inclusivity of our organization, and
- 2) Develop anti-racism materials specific to issues within our Department and more broadly within the university, including methods for measuring and reporting progress.

Our Pod's deliverables that will be developed throughout the URGE program should help the Department to meet goals set forth in the departmental Diversity Action Plan<sup>5</sup> (developed Fall 2020), and in ongoing AJEDI events and activities on campus.

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard & Cooperdock (2018) No progress on diversity in 40 years. *Nature Geoscience* 11, 292–295. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41561-018-0116-6>

<sup>2</sup> <https://notimeforsilence.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.change.org/p/geoscientists-call-for-a-robust-anti-racism-plan-for-the-geosciences>

<sup>4</sup> <https://urgeoscience.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2021/01/URGE-Deliverable-Agreement-Instruction.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://diversity.utk.edu/diversity-action-plan/>

Our U of Tennessee Pod has the following meetings and deliverables scheduled, connected with each of the eight URGE Session themes:

Session Number	Session Dates	Topic	Session Subtitle	Deliverables	Interview Day	Pod Meeting dates and times
1	1/18 - 1/29	<b>Racism and Definitions</b>	Defining the Words we Use	Group Norms & Leadership Agreement	Jan 25th, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	Jan 29, 2-3 pm
2	2/1 - 2/12	<b>Racism and Individuals</b>	What is my place in all of this?	Policy for Dealing with Complaints & Pod Picture	Feb 8th, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	Feb 5, 2-3 pm + Feb 12, 2-3 pm
3	2/15 - 2/26	<b>Racism and History</b>	Where are we as the geosciences?	Statistical Analyses of Program and Its History	Feb 22nd, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	Feb 19, 2-3 pm + Feb 26, 2-3 pm
4	3/1 - 3/12	<b>Racism and Justice</b>	The Long-Lasting impacts of Racism in Geoscience	Policies for Working with Communities of Color	March 8th, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	March 5, 2-3 pm + March 12, 2-3 pm
5	3/15 - 3/26	<b>Racism and Accessibility</b>	Breaking Down the Barriers in our Discipline	Admissions and Hiring Policies	Mar 22nd, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	March 19, 2-3 pm + March 26, 2-3 pm
6	3/29 - 4/9	<b>Racism and Inclusivity</b>	Building an Anti-Racist and Inclusive Community	Lab and Field Code of Conduct	April 6th, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	April 2, 2-3 pm + April 9, 2-3 pm
7	4/12 - 4/23	<b>Racism and Self Care</b>	Taking Care of Ourselves in the Face of Racism	Asset Map of Resources to Combat Racism	April 19th, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	April 16, 2-3 pm + April 23, 2-3 pm
8	4/26- 5/7	<b>Racism and Accountability</b>	How do we keep Ourselves Accountable to Anti-Racist Work?	Accountability Program	May 3rd, 5:30 - 6:30 pm	April 30, 2-3 pm + May 7, 2-3 pm

At present, the U of Tennessee Pod membership already includes Department leadership (e.g., Interim Department Head, Associate Department Head, Director of Graduate Studies, etc.). These positions are listed below with the names of the Pod participants. Consequently, every Pod meeting will have leadership in attendance. A future goal, which will be discussed during Session 3, will be to invite members of the College and Graduate School leadership, such as the Dean or Associate Deans, to at least one if not more future Pod meetings, and no later than a month after the end of the completed URGE program.

Signature

Date

Signature


Date

Annette S. Engel  
Pod Leader

Edmund Perfect  
Interim Department Head

Molly McCanta  
Pod Co-Leader

We are committed to pursuing these objectives individually, as a pod, and as an organization, signed:

Name	Department Leadership Positions	Signature
Ed Perfect	Interim Department Head	
Annette Engel	Associate Head; Annual Evaluations and Awards Committee Chair; Diversity Council member	
Molly McCanta	Co-Director of the Undergraduate Program Committee; Diversity Council member	
Chris Fedo	Director of Graduate Studies	
Steve Romaniello	Diversity Council Chair, Member Graduate Admissions & Program Committee	
Jacob Benner	Member Undergraduate Program Committee	
Kristen Butler		
Stephanie Dumheller-Horton		
Nadine Grambling	GeoClub President	
Tyler Grambling		
CJ Leight		
Claire Mondro	Student-Faculty Liaison	
Audrey Paterson		
Hannah Rigoni		
Andrew Steen		
Aidan Sweeney		
Brittan Wogsland		