Pod Guidelines: Reciprocal Expectations for Student and Faculty Members of the U Wyo Geology and Geophysics URGE Pod, University of Wyoming

The Department of Geology and Geophysics (G&G) has committed itself to a sustained, multi-pronged effort to promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) in the department and across the University of Wyoming campus. As a first step, it has assembled a DEI committee with the charge of (i) conducting a DEI climate survey in the department; (ii) creating a vision statement for progress on DEI issues; (iii) developing a multi-pronged action plan for achieving objectives outlined in the vision statement; and (iv) guiding the implementation of the action plan. The committee is composed of student and faculty members of the G&G department, **and during the spring semester of 2021, this committee will use the URGEOSCIENCE framework to help guide it in the initial steps toward the goals outlined above.** This document outlines guidelines and expectations for student and faculty members of the pod.

Objectives for 2021
The DEI committee has identified seven objectives for 2021:
1) Develop an online, anonymous climate survey to assess perceived levels of belonging, inclusivity, equity, and diversity in the G&G department.
2) Administer the DEI climate survey to students, staff, and faculty of the G&G department.
3) Collate and interpret results of the DEI climate survey.
4) Use results of the climate survey to develop a vision statement that identifies where the department should strive to be in five years on DEI issues.
5) Use the vision statement to inform development of a plan consisting of transformative anti-racist/anti-sexist/pro-LGBTQAI+ actions that are achievable on a realistic timeline.
6) Obtain advice and consent from the G&G faculty and students as a whole on the vision statement and action plan.
7) Enact to the extent possible in 2021 the actions identified in the plan and thus take initial steps towards improving departmental climate.

Because many of these actions are aligned with deliverables that will be completed in the eight two-week-long URGE sessions, the DEI committee has agreed to form, join, and use an URGE pod as a mechanism for making progress on its DEI goals in Spring 2021.

Composition of the Pod
The pod currently includes both graduate and undergraduate student members, as well as full time UW faculty members. All members have expressed a deep interest in improving DEI in the department.

Pod Meetings
The pod will meet regularly throughout the spring 2021 semester in sync with the eight URGE sessions. At minimum, there will be biweekly meetings of one hour length, but more frequent

meetings may be needed at times to ensure timely completion of pod objectives. A WhenIsGood or When2Meet poll will be distributed to identify times that work for everyone in the pod during the spring semester. All pod members are encouraged to attend all meetings, but it is recognized that this will not always be possible due to scheduling conflicts and unexpected emergencies. All meetings in spring 2021 will be conducted via Zoom.

The goal of the URGE program to unlearn racism and to put new knowledge into practice through a plan of action. To make this possible as a collective, we must ensure that all voices are heard during pod meetings. This means

1) listening actively and respecting others when they are talking (and using the "raise-hand" function in Zoom) to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak and to listen;
2) speaking from your own experience instead of generalizing (e.g., using "I" instead of "they," "we," "you");
3) being willing to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refraining from personal attacks (i.e., focusing on ideas and problems rather than people);
4) participating to the fullest of your ability because every individual voice matters;
5) sharing your own story and experience instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your spin on their experience;
6) seeking a deeper understanding and not necessarily universal agreement;
7) staying conscious of body language and nonverbal responses (since they can be as disrespectful as words);
8) assuming that everyone has good intentions but also acknowledging the impact of saying something that hurts someone else, even if it is unintended; and
9) maintaining confidentiality, because all stories shared in pod stay in pod unless explicit permission is given that it can be shared in another setting.

Pod Member Rights
- All students and faculty pod members have the right
  - to determine their own identity;
  - to be called by whatever name they wish;
  - to have that name pronounced correctly; and
  - to be referred to by whatever pronouns they wish.
- All pod members have the right to be heard by and the responsibility to actively listen to their fellow committee members.
- Hence, all members will have an equal vote on decisions that require official pod action, including the decision to submit deliverables. (An exception, due to existing department bylaws and university regulations, is that the G&G department head will have veto powers on all pod decisions.)
- Because DEI issues can be emotionally charged, student and faculty members of the pod have the right to excuse themselves from pod activities at any time with no questions asked and without fear of being excluded from future activities.
- If a pod member finds that there are aspects of the interactions on this pod that result in barriers to inclusion, that committee member has the right (and responsibility) to contact the G&G department head privately about the situation without fear of reprisal.

Pod Member Expectations and Involvement

All members of the pod are expected to do the bi-weekly readings, watch the biweekly URGE interviews, and attend pod meetings to the extent possible.

The faculty members of the pod are expected to
- be the primary interface between the pod, the department head, and other departments and units of the university;
- be an intermediary in anything that involves public exposure, to protect student pod members;
- lead in developing content for deliverables produced by the pod; and
- lead on setting the agenda and timing of meetings with input from students.

Student involvement may include some or all of the following:
- aiding faculty pod members in creating content for deliverables;
- reviewing and commenting on deliverables produced by the committee;
- participating when possible (e.g., when it does not conflict with coursework or TA/GA duties);
- raising awareness of pod initiatives among other students within the department when appropriate and when student pod members feel comfortable doing so; and
- educating G&G faculty on department climate and raising awareness of issues unknown to faculty committee members (when student pod members feel comfortable doing so).

Pod Deliverables

Every two weeks, the pod will be required to submit one or more deliverables to the URGE organizers via the URGE website. The pod leader will be responsible for uploading deliverables every other Friday on the due date. Each pod member is responsible for reviewing and signing off on each deliverable. A google sheet will be used to keep track of who has reviewed and approved (or disapproved) of each deliverable. We will strive for consensus in all decisions. However, recognizing that levels of commitment will vary among pod members across the semester, and that not everyone will always be able to vote, we will require only a two-thirds majority of pod members to approve each deliverable.

Additional tasks will be assigned on a rotating basis including:
- taking notes as needed, especially in discussions of deliverables
- reading supplemental articles for deliverables as needed