

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



EPSP URGE Pod – Session 2 Deliverable

Note: This document has three parts

- Part A: Results of investigating the reporting process and outcomes at AGU
- Part B: Draft recommendations for an EPSP Complaint and Reporting Policy from podlet 2
- Part C: Draft suggestions from AGU EPSP podlet 1 to the new DEI committee and those involved in organizing it

Part A: Results of investigating the reporting process and outcomes at AGU

This is what was found by the URGE Pod of the Earth and Planetary Surface Processes Section regarding AGU policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. All information was public. Future answers that are only found through follow up with contacts will be noted. Responses to questions posed in the URGE example deliverable **are highlighted in orange text**.

I. The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:

- o [Link](#) - AGU roles and processes for investigating misconduct allegations
- o [Link](#) - AGU's Scientific Ethics and Integrity Policy
(This document includes the details for how to report a complaint)
- o [Link](#) - AGU's Ethics and Equity Center Data and Publishing
- o Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?
 - The AGU Scientific Ethics Integrity Policy was last updated in August 2017
 - There is a Ethics Committee seems to be in charge of the policy
- o Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?
 - [Link](#) The rates of reporting are made public once a year starting 2017

II. What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?

- o Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?
 - Either a third party or the target of the misconduct (?)
 - "Allegations of misconduct do not have to originate with AGU members. Allegations of scientific misconduct may be submitted to AGU when the alleged action is directly connected to a program operated under the direction of AGU, including its publications, presentations, and meetings; or its AGU members in other official duties." [Link](#)
- o Can reports be made online? **Yes** Where? [Link](#) Anonymously? **No**

- Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?
Ethics Committee Chair; currently [Michael McPhaden](#)
- Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization? Send to: ethics@agu.org

III. What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?

- Follow-up by supervisor, training (bias, etc.), disciplinary action, termination.
 - “If a finding of scientific misconduct has been made, the Board of Directors will decide the action to be taken. These may include appropriate sanctions, the period over which the sanction will be in effect, correction of the publication record, and/or recommendations for education or training. Sanctions, in increasing severity, may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a) Written reprimand or warning.
 - b) Removal from AGU volunteer position.
 - c) Publication of “errata” notices.
 - d) Withdrawal/retraction of presentations, publication, or posters.
 - e) Placement of an author or reviewer on an AGU Editor’s watch list. f) Notification to other journals
 - g) Suspension from publishing in AGU journal(s) for a specific period, including permanently. AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics
 - h) Suspension from making presentations at AGU sponsored meeting(s) for a specific period, including permanently.
 - i) Suspension of membership.
 - j) Permanent expulsion from AGU.
 - k) Denial or revocation of honors and awards.
 - l) Notification to respondent’s home institution.
 - m) Publication/notification to members of incident in Eos or other AGU publication.
 - n) Public statement regarding the scientific misconduct. “
 - “When an AGU member is sanctioned by another organization for scientific misconduct or convicted of criminal activity, the AGU Board may consider its own sanctions related to membership, attendance at AGU programs, and publishing with AGU.”
 - “All members are required to self-report if they are currently under investigation or have been convicted of scientific misconduct, or a serious criminal activity that violates the AGU ethics code, when they are nominated for an AGU committee or office, or selected to receive an AGU award. Nominations for awards and recognition will include a statement that to best of knowledge of the nominator, the nominee is not currently under investigation and has not been convicted of scientific misconduct or criminal activity. A member may request in writing from the AGU Board an exemption from this reporting requirement when the violation is older than 10 years, steps have been taken to mitigate the violation (through such actions as education, supervision, or settlement), or there are other mitigating circumstances that the AGU Board should consider.”
- Who decides the outcomes/consequences? the Board of Directors. What is the process?
 - The Ethics committee investigates (within 90 days, but extensions can be granted), and sends its report to the Board of Directors, who may accept/reject recommendations by the Ethics committee, but not the findings. The action by the Board of Directors is summarized in a report for the record and a copy forwarded to the Ethics Committee. The Board notifies the Chair and the Respondent and the Complainant of its decision within 10 business days of the Executive Session.
- Are reports tracked? Yes How are they tracked? By who?

- “Editors, the Ethics Chair and AGU Ethics Program Staff will be responsible for recording allegations and decisions in a secure AGU database with access limited to their use and that of the Board of Directors. The record will include the allegation and relevant reports and decisions. *Reports of publication misconduct that did not result in a finding of code of conduct violations will be destroyed at the end of one year. Reports of misconduct related to harassment will be maintained for up to ten years in a secure data base, to help address the issue of repeat offenders. A summary report of AGU ethics cases and their disposition will be made available to AGU Council and membership annually.*”
- Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
 - This is not immediately obvious from the policy.

IV. What resources are available for individuals reporting?

- Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.
 - There is legal help for students, postdoc, and untenured faculty
<https://ethicsandequitycenter.org/legal-consultation/>
- Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
 - Language mostly focuses on sanctions after misconduct has been found.
- Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
 - Language mostly focuses on sanctions after misconduct has been found.

V. What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?

- Petitions of # signatures trigger a town hall, meeting with organizational leadership, or policy change. What is the follow-up process for town halls and meetings?
 - Unclear if there is any formal language for this at AGU or EPSP.
- Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy.
 - There is an AGU-wide Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Members and scope are listed:
<https://www.agu.org/Learn-About-AGU/About-AGU/Governance/Committees/Diversity-Committee>
- Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents.
 - There are cultural surveys (i.e. recent [AdvanceGeo survey](#)). It is unclear if these are regular or not.
 - Post-meeting optional feedback surveys
- Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve
 - Student committees exist at both the EPSP and AGU level. Students on these committees serve as the primary contact for relaying student input.
- Data accountability, tracking, and public reporting.

Part B: Draft recommendations for an EPSP Complaint and Reporting Policy

EPSP needs its own complaint and reporting policy. Here we provide a draft outline for such a policy with recommendations for specific steps to be taken by the EPSP governance team and the EPSP Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee in developing and implementing a complete policy.

Statement of Intent:

(Reaffirm and possibly extend the AGU policy statement of intent): AGU members work to maintain an environment that allows science and scientific careers to flourish through respectful, inclusive, and equitable treatment of others. As a statement of principle, AGU rejects discrimination and harassment by any means, based on factors such as ethnic or national origin, race, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, or economic class. In addition, AGU opposes all forms of bullying including threatening, humiliating, coercive, or intimidating conduct that causes harm to, interferes with, or sabotages scientific activity and careers. Discrimination, harassment (in any form), and bullying create a hostile environment that reduces the quality, integrity, and pace of the advancement of science by marginalizing individuals and communities. It also damages productivity and career advancement, and prevents the healthy exchange of ideas.

We affirm that discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), or bullying in any scientific or learning environment is unacceptable, and constitutes scientific misconduct under the AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy. Such behavior should be reported and addressed with consequences for the offender, including but not limited to AGU sanctions or expulsion as outlined in this Policy. In addition, as part of AGU's commitment to providing a safe, positive, professional environment, the SafeAGU Program has been created to provide trained staff and volunteers to meeting attendees if they need to report harassment, discrimination, bullying or other safety/security issues during an AGU meeting, or to request confidential support when dealing with harassment-related issues that may not rise to the level of a formal ethics complaint.

Scope:

This complaint and reporting policy applies to virtual and in-person events hosted and sponsored by the EPSP section. This includes, but is not limited to the AGU Fall Meeting, EPSP networking and professional development events, AGU publications, Gilbert Club, and the EPSP Connects series. This policy not only applies to specific complaints levied against an individual or group of individuals for specific instances of harassment, bullying, or discrimination, but also reports of adverse, non-welcoming, or non-representative environments.

General Process for Reporting:

In general, formal allegations regarding specific instances of bullying, harassment, or discrimination by an individual or individuals at EPSP sponsored events fall within the purview of the AGU's Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy. In this policy, reports must be submitted, in writing, by letter or email (to ethics@agu.org). For more information regarding the specific complaint policy and the investigation and follow-up processes please refer to the policy itself which can be found [at this link](#).

For non-specific reports of harassment, bullying, or discrimination, or reports of adverse, non-welcoming, or non-representative environments, complainants should use the online form provided by EPSP. This online form allows for the filing of anonymous complaints, should the complainant choose. Reports from this form will be reviewed by the soon-to-be formed EPSP DEI committee.

DEI Advocate:

EPSP shall create an Advocate role that will be filled by either an individual or set of individuals. This advocate will assist potential complainants through the reporting process. This assistance may include educating complainants of their reporting options and helping individuals get through roadblocks with either the AGU Ethics team or the EPSP DEI committee. The advocate will not be a "mandatory reporter" and

interactions with the advocate will be kept confidential (email interactions regarding complaints will be protected from AGU and its members).

DEI Follow-up Process:

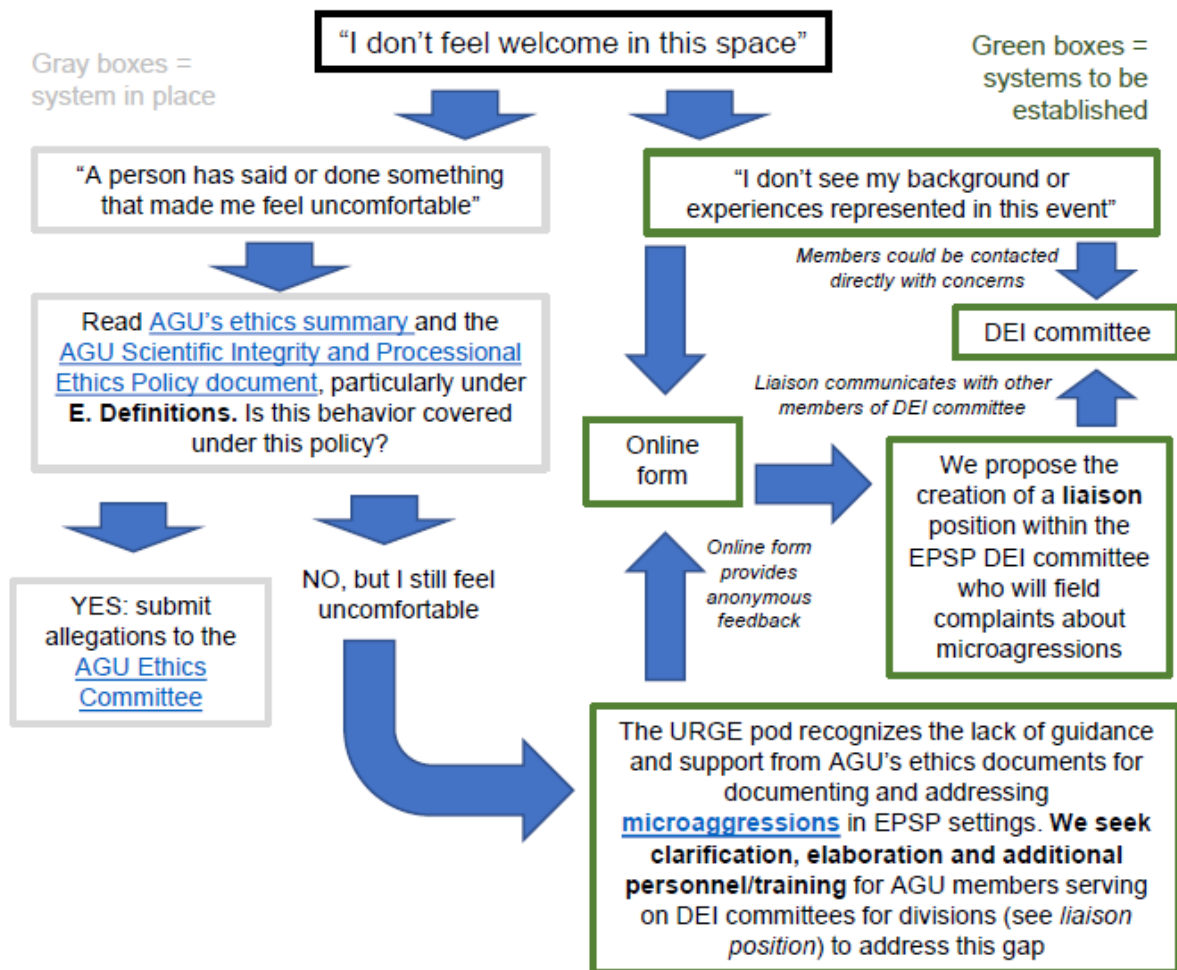
This needs to be developed.

Data Collection and Reporting:

This needs to be developed.

AGU EPSP Podlet 2 Complaint and Reporting Policy system

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URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



EPSP URGE Podlet 1 – Session 2 Deliverable

Note: This deliverable is the product of one Podlet (a subgroup of the EPSP URGE pod). It reflects discussions among the Podlet, but might not reflect the opinions/ideas of all members of the EPSP URGE Pod.

Deliverable 2: suggestions from AGU EPSP podlet 2 to the new DEI committee and those involved in organizing it

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The EPSP DEI committee will act as a contact point for issues arising from members of the EPSP Section, and during any EPSP Section programming (e.g., Fall Meeting, Wonder Coffee Hours, etc.). The AGU has its own policy for handling ethical issues (<https://www.agu.org/Learn-About-AGU/About-AGU/Ethics>); the DEI committee directive on ethics complaints is not meant to supercede the AGU policy, but instead to provide additional options and support for Section members in pursuit of justice on ethics issues.

Other channels for seeking justice for ethical issues for matters arising related to the AGU and EPSP communities are:

- <https://www.agu.org/Learn-About-AGU/About-AGU/Ethics>
- <https://ethicsandequitycenter.org/>

Following is a draft of guidelines / suggestions designed to help guide the EPSP DEI committee during formation. The ideas are suggested starting points for further committee and community-wide discussion.

A primary directive for the committee will be to establish definitions regarding the scope of complaints they will handle. We anticipate the committee will handle complaints regarding sexual harassment, racial injustices, derogatory remarks of any kind, but other topics are

unclear. For example, will the committee handle complaints regarding intellectual property (e.g., scooping), or complaints about someone being mean in the hallway?

How to register a complaint or raise an issue:

- The committee should try to accept anonymous complaints. The AGU does not accept anonymous complaints, so it will be important to state that anonymous complaints cannot be elevated above the EPSP DEI committee to the AGU level. It will need to be verified that it is allowable to accept anonymous complaints at all under the AGU policy.
- The committee should consider providing three options for registering complaints: directly to the section leadership, directly to the DEI committee, and through the formal AGU process. In the first two options, the committee will handle the complaint as best as possible, and would elevate (with permission) to the AGU level as needed. In the third option, the DEI committee should be familiar with the AGU process to help guide EPSP members through that process.
- In conjunction with aforementioned registering options, the committee should consider a webform to receive complaints.

How to handle complaints or issues:

- The committee should handle all matters related to ethics complaints confidentially, limited to DEI committee members and EPSP section leadership.
- The committee should delegate 2 members of the committee to ensure the resolution of the ethics issue. One delegate must hold a professional position no more senior than “graduate student”. The other delegate should hold a position at the “assistant professor” or higher level (or equivalent positions in institutions outside the US, or non-academic institutions).
- The delegates will not have the ability to punish members, but should be responsible for communicating with the complainant about the issue and determining the proper course for resolution. This may involve resolving the complaint directly with the complaine, elevating to section leadership, or elevating to AGU (only with permission).
- Exceptions should be any complaints involving legal-level crimes, which will not be handled at the EPSP level, and delegates will instead help the person raising the issue ensure their issue is heard at the AGU level (again, only with permission).
- Reports should be tracked by the DEI committee and all personally identifying information will be kept confidential to the committee. Reports are elevated to section leadership when three complaints have been made against the same person.

Outcomes

- The delegates will respond to the complaint within 3 weeks. At this point, the issue must be advanced to a higher level (the AGU), if it has not been resolved.

- The committee should determine what types of punishments may be administered by the EPSP section leadership. This may reveal mechanisms for resolving complaints, or highlight the need for the committee to act more as a guiding body for complaints to the AGU policy.

What Resources are Available for Individual Reporting

- AGU ethics program staff members are committed to listening to and addressing complaints and to guiding victims through options confidentially before she, he, or they decide how to proceed, including details for potential informal solutions or a formal complaint.
- After filing a complaint with AGU or with their home institution, a complainant may request that AGU provide protections from harassment, discrimination, or bullying at AGU activities. Such actions may include, but are not limited to: barring the respondent from a complainant's talk, barring a respondent from an AGU activity, or providing the complainant with an escort during AGU activities.
- SafeAGU provides access to free consultation with a legal advisor, for those experiencing harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation or other misconduct.