

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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### URGE Demographic Data for Northern Illinois University Geology & Environmental Geosciences

**Summary:** The NIU GEOL Pod at Northern Illinois University gathered demographic data and existing stated goals for representation. We developed proposals to collect and report demographic data, develop goals, increase recruitment efforts, and communicate barriers to these efforts to upper administration.

#### Current Demographic Data

- [Link](#) - NIU Student Demographics
- Over the past 5 years, the demographics of the Geology & Environmental Geosciences Department is
  - Undergraduates:
    - 83% White non-Hispanic
    - 9% Hispanic/ Latin(a/o/x)
    - 5% Other
    - 2% Black, non-Hispanic
    - 2% Asian non-Hispanic
    - 55.7% Male / 44.3% Female
    - 38% First-Generation College Students
  - Graduates
    - 85% White non-Hispanic
    - 9% Other
    - 4% Hispanic/ Latin(a/o/x)
    - 2% Asian non-Hispanic
    - 58.3% Male / 41.8% Female
- The department does not collect demographic data on invited speakers.

#### Comparison to field as a whole

According to gender representation data (provided by [AGI](#)), the NIU Geology & Environmental Geosciences Department falls just under the current national enrollment of female students by approximately 1.7% (undergraduate) and 2.2% (graduate). In the undergraduate program, individuals identifying as Hispanic/ Latin(a/o/x) and Black, non-Hispanic are underrepresented at 1.8% and 0.4%, respectively, below national figures. Similarly, the graduate program demographics show that the number of individuals identifying as Hispanic/ Latin(a/o/x) is 2.3% below national enrollment. AGI does not list a direct comparison for the university identifier of Asian, non-Hispanic. Additionally, NIU combines all remaining minoritized students who do not identify as Hispanic/ Latin(a/o/x), Black non-Hispanic, or Asian non-Hispanic under the heading of “other”.

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### Institution and Department Goals

- NIU has a [mission](#) that includes the following equity and inclusion statements:
  - “We seek and are strengthened by the diverse perspectives and experiences of our university community members.
  - We use an inclusive decision-making process.
  - We appreciate and respect every member of our community.”
- Department:
  - The department currently has no stated mission.
  - No specific measurable goals exist currently with respect to increasing representation.
  - The department submitted an AGI Bridge program proposal in Fall 2020.

### Proposed Policy Changes for the NIU Department of Geology & Environmental Geosciences

The URGE Pod drafted the following suggestions for policies the department may vote to implement:

- Colloquium
  - Bring in speakers that represent diverse voices in the geosciences to speak about science: initial goal is 25% of speakers. We suggest [this reference](#) for speaker recruitment.
  - Bring in speakers to speak on issues of diversity in geosciences (social sciences research on diversity): DEI committee will nominate one speaker per year/semester for the regular colloquium series. (Current suggestions include: Saber speakers, Anne-Marie Nunez, Ohio State; Julie Posselt, USC). We suggest an additional honorarium for these speakers.
  - Create a Qualtrics survey to collect standard demographic information on our speakers
  - Each year the DEI committee will report this to the department
  - The department will host the data about our speakers on the website
- Fellowship Opportunities
  - Can the department allocate fellowships toward recruiting underrepresented graduate students? Could we offer funds to supplement moving expenses?
  - The Pod suggests we pursue conversations with specific donors regarding allocation of existing fellowships for recruitment of URM graduate students.
- Department Goals
  - Propose that the department develop goals for recruiting diverse students.



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- Include statement about how data will be collected, reported, tracked, and utilized in decision making
- Suggest pulling comparison data from [this link](#).
- Recruitment Plan
  - Create a plan for advertising to diverse grad students (e.g. [LSMCE](#), SACNAS, etc.)
  - Create a plan for recruiting community college students (Illinois CC geology org) and high school students (IMSA)
  - In-reach to NIU STEAM summer camps, science nights, libraries (collaboration with SGE & faculty).
  - Promote research opportunities for undergraduates
- Website
  - Outward facing department page that:
    - Reports data on speakers
    - Reports aggregated data on student diversity
    - Financial support for students (application fee waivers available to Illinois Veterans, McNair Scholars and GRE waiver recipients, scholarship funds, fellowships, etc.)
    - Promote/highlight research opportunities for undergraduate students
- Administration
  - Meet with Graduate school about fees issues
  - Meet with College about recruitment barriers, data collection/reporting barriers