

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



JOHNS HOPKINS EARTH AND PLANETARY SCIENCES URGE POD

This is what was found by JHU EPS URGE team on Hiring and/or Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve.

Note: We acknowledge this information is not always accessible to students and even staff. If you do not have access to this information, please reflect on your own experience and outline what admissions and/or hiring should be like to foster a diverse and inclusive community.

- **What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?**
 - Graduate Admissions
 - There is no EEO statement on the [department's page](#) regarding graduate admissions. There may be one once an applicant continues to the application site.
 - The [department's page](#) does explicitly note that the application fee may be waived.
 - Postdoctoral Fellowships and Research Scientists
 - Named postdoctoral fellowships (i.e., Blaustein or Pim): JHU's EEO statement is included on the interfolio [application page](#). "Johns Hopkins University is committed to equal opportunity for its faculty, staff, and students. To that end, the university does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status or other legally protected characteristic. The university is committed to providing qualified individuals access to all academic and employment programs, benefits and activities on the basis of demonstrated ability, performance and merit without regard to personal factors that are irrelevant to the program involved."

¹ R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples, (2017).

² <https://careers.whoj.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/>

³ K. Cobb, #GRExit Resources, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13215461.v1>, (2020).

⁴ J. Posselt, Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvjghw8s>, (2016).

⁵ <https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html>

⁶ K. Griffin, J. Bennett, T. York, Leveraging Promising Practices, Washington DC: Aspire Alliance, (2020).



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- Faculty hiring
 - A [2014 listing](#) for a faculty position in EPS included the statement, “Johns Hopkins University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, and actively encourages interest from minorities and women.”
- Undergrad research assistant/jobs
 - There is no statement on the university’s undergrad research [website](#), nor on the [portal](#) to search for opportunities. For the latter, a faculty member could put an EEO statement in their description.
- **Where are advertisements posted or sent? Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?**
 - Staff and research positions are posted on <https://jobs.jhu.edu/>
 - Positions are also included on standard job boards and email lists (e.g., Astrojob rumor mill, ecolog, CLIMLIST, metjobs, MPOWIR joblist, AGU, AMS).
 - Faculty webpages list potential research opportunities.
 - Some informal postings are on twitter.
 - Researchers have created informal crowd-sourced documents (i.e., Dr. Sarah Horst contributes to a google document listing faculty in planetary scientists with funding for graduate students).
 - Conference booths (i.e., GSA, discussion on sharing a booth with APL at AGU)
 - We would like our department to establish relationships with local Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to improve recruitment of graduate students. The school of engineering at Hopkins already has a [program](#) established.
 - Postdoc positions are posted on interfolio, the EPS page, AGU jobs page and wherever else the faculty decide to share it.
 - Undergraduates can search for research opportunities through [ForagerOne](#). That being said, it is uncertain how many EPS faculty are active in this portal, many undergraduates reach out to faculty individually to ask about research opportunities or faculty solicit students in class.
- **What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores³/grades? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?**
 - Requirements for Graduate Admissions
 - Statement of purpose, personal statement, CV, 3 letters of recommendation, university/college transcripts, TOEFL or IELTS, \$75 application fee.



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- The following actions have been taken to make the application process more equitable:
 - GRE requirement is removed and is not accepted anymore.
 - Students can request a \$75 application fee waiver (they only have to ask for it, no approval process is involved).
 - TOEFL/IELTS waivers are allowed. Students have English interviews with faculty or have other discussions about why their level of English is sufficient.
- Ideas on how to improve the application process:
 - Use more direct questions in the application in lieu of a statement of purpose, or give more detailed guidance on what should be included in the statement of purpose.
 - Include a question allowing an applicant to address any aspect of their application (low grades, no letter from main advisor, etc.).
 - Provide feedback to the applicants as to why they did not receive admissions.
- Postdoctoral Fellowships and Research Scientists
 - Named postdoctoral fellowships (i.e., Blaustein or Pim): CV, 3 references, 1-2 page research proposal.
- Undergraduate Research
 - No formalized application if coordinated with a faculty member directly.
 - For certain funding programs (e.g., Provost's undergraduate research award), students must submit:
 - Basic information for the online application (i.e., name, JHU email, cell number, anticipated year of graduation, mailing address, major(s)).
 - Project proposal, must not exceed 4 pages total including figures and bibliography (see [proposal guidelines](#)).
 - Mentor name(s) and Hopkins email address(es) up to 2 mentors are allowed. Affiliates of Hopkins (e.g., Lieber Institute, Kennedy Krieger, Carnegie Institute, NIH, etc.) can also serve as mentors, but must be approved by the HOUR office if they do not have a Hopkins email address yet, our system utilizes SSO protocols for security.
- **How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric^{4,5} public? What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?**



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- Graduate admissions:
 - Students usually indicate which faculty they are interested in working with and those particular faculty thoroughly look at their application. The faculty make sure all the applications are reviewed, even if they do not indicate which faculty they are interested in working with. Each application has at least 3 reviewers to thoroughly review their application and discuss if they recommend admission.
 - Typically, the faculty first look at applicants without considering demographics. Then before decisions are made, they check to see that the demographics of the admitted group is at least as diverse and representative as that of the applicant pool.
 - A list is made of all admitted graduate students and discussed with the entire faculty before offers go out.
- Postdoctoral Fellowships and Research Scientists
 - There is no rubric, nor is there any departmental guidelines regarding salary. The hiring faculty member has complete control in the process.
 - The Krieger School of Arts and Sciences provides a [guideline](#) regarding salaries for postdoctoral fellowships. At minimum, they should be offered a salary equivalent to the NIH NRSA postdoctoral fellows with 0 years of experience. In practice, our department's minimum postdoc salary is higher than the NIH standard.
- Undergraduate Research
 - This is faculty specific. Generally, opportunities are assessed based on conversations with students, other faculty who have had them in class, and in some cases the students' academic record.
- **Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?**
 - Graduate Admissions
 - At least three faculty members, including the faculty that would be the student's advisor, review an application and determine whether or not that student is admissible.
 - All students considered admissible are presented to all faculty before decisions are formally made.
 - Postdoctoral Fellowships and Research Scientists
 - For postdoctoral fellowships that are paid by a faculty member's grant funding, the faculty member runs the application process and makes the decision



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- Named postdoctoral fellowships (i.e., Blaustein or Pim): All faculty review applications and a three person review committee is selected. This committee is usually composed of faculty members who are not likely to serve as an advisor for potential candidates (to minimize conflict of interest). A subset of applicants are selected for interviews. All interviewees are asked the same series of questions by the same person and then given an opportunity to ask questions to the committee. This year, we added a half hour presentation on past work and future plans.
- Faculty Hiring
 - This is on the Homewood Academic Council [website](#).
- Undergraduate research
 - The decision is solely made by the faculty member who will be the supervisor.
- **Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?**
 - To our understanding, neither our hiring nor our admissions process has been evaluated by outside consultants.
- **Has your university or company implemented or considered strategies like cohort hiring, mentoring, dual career support and partner hires, re-visioning your work culture, or other considerations outlined in “Leveraging Promising Practices”⁶?**
 - Graduate Admissions
 - All graduate students have mentoring committees made up of three faculty members including their advisors. Also, beginning fall 2020, new students were given “buddies,” upper-level graduate students to act as mentors and help those students connect with the department.
 - Postdoctoral Fellowships and Research Scientists
 - There is currently no formal mentoring program for postdoctoral fellows and research scientists, this should be implemented within the department.
 - Faculty Hiring
 - New faculty are matched with both an internal (i.e., within the department) and external (i.e., different department) mentor. The most recent new cohort of faculty participated in a trial version of a “Launch program” designed after a program at University of Michigan where they were connected with a launch committee in their first year to help jump start their faculty careers. This committee included a chair (tenured professor



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in another department), an internal mentor, an external mentor, and the department chair. The goal was to meet once a month for the first year. The program is continuing and it would be good to discuss how it could be improved upon. Pre-tenure faculty are invited to informal meetings with members of the tenure and promotion committees to learn more about the process. Additionally, faculty in our department who have served on the tenure and promotion committee have met with early career faculty to discuss the process.

- Undergrad research assistants/job
 - We have tried to link into programs like [C-stream](#), which is an NSF funded program via The Chesapeake Research Consortium to create a research experience for a cohort of underrepresented minority students. There are also programs in the engineering school and biomedical research that could be tapped into.