



URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for University/

This is what was found by the Department of Geology and Earth Science POD at James Madison University on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**
 - Our POD has knowledge of approximately 8 different projects, including traditional and community-based research projects, which have had meaningful interactions with local and regional communities of color.
 - One faculty member worked with three students using Ground Penetrating Radar to identify unmarked burials at antebellum cemeteries known or suspected to contain burials of people who had been enslaved. This work was conducted at four different cemeteries at three sites, two of which are National Historical sites.
 - One of our faculty focuses on conducting community-based research, often located in the Caribbean. In addition, he started communication to develop community-rooted research in collaboration with the Monacan Indian Nation (Virginia/North Carolina) that centralized in cave and karst research.

- **What worked well in these interactions?**
 - For the cemeteries project, one thing that worked well was simply interaction with community members with interest in the project. There was a dedication ceremony for one of the cemeteries (Corhaven Graveyard) which was attended by a faculty member and one student, along with interested parties from the community. There was a dedication followed by sharing food and stories- we were able to explain to several people how GPR worked and what our results indicated. At James Madison's Montpelier, we were able to meet with a group of about 30 people who were descended from people who were enslaved at Montpelier, demonstrating the GPR unit (guiding them to find a buried pipe), and again talking them through the process and results of our study. It was clear even in the moment that the (quite simple)

- efforts we were making were very deeply appreciated. Another step we took that worked well was to share our data and results in the form of posters specifically developed for display at the sites (Corhaven Graveyard and Belle Grove Plantation). While we didn't make a poster for Montpelier, our results were made available to the descendants and staff archaeologists onsite. We are currently working on a paper to be submitted to the Journal of Archaeological Science, and plan to deliver a copy of that publication for display at each site as well.
- Community-based collaborations seems to be attractive to many communities. Community members are really happy with research is currently in development.
 - **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**
 - Not giving enough lead time to “truly” include community members in the project and as a result perhaps coming off as being impatient
 - **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**
 - We will include JMU's “Indigenous Land and Enslaved Peoples Acknowledgement” at the beginning of this year's Senior Student Research Symposium (<https://www.jmu.edu/cfi/inclusion-access-equity/indigenous-land-and-enslaved-peoples-acknowledgement.shtml>)
 - **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**
 - We may benefit from identifying a central point of contact in our department for working with communities of color.
 - We may benefit from having a “best practice” document for planning and conducting research with communities of color.