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## DEI Practices for Field and Laboratory Experiences

The following is a draft plan by the Amherst Mammoth URGE Pod for field and lab practices at home and abroad. *Many ideas and paraphrased text come from multiple URGE sources and deliverables!*

### Code of Conduct

Learning and undertaking science in the field and in laboratory settings is an important part of most disciplines in the Earth Sciences. Maintaining a safe and inclusive learning environment is critical for this endeavor. Working in the field often can include situations that are not applicable to a local laboratory trip, such as lack of communications with support networks, unfamiliar routines of daily living, and cultural differences, which demands trip leaders to be proactive in promoting a safe environment for all participants. Our code of conduct, reporting procedures, and a discussion on preparation for research experiences should be detailed at the Geology major meeting in the fall and spring and for every summer session when student research begins. In addition, we will *endeavor* to provide this information on 1) course syllabi, our 2) departmental Moodle page 3) *student handbook (TBD)* and 3) in a pre-trip discussion for any class that involves field experiences. While our Geology Department Code is a work in progress, many sources delivered by other institutions found during and through URGE will be incorporated.

### ***Amherst College Conduct and Reporting Policies:***

Amherst College policies for students and employees apply equally in the field as on campus. These include:

- [Amherst College Bias Handbook](#)
- [Community Standards Reporting Form for Students](#)
- [Identity-based Harm Incident Report Form](#)
- [Community Standards](#)

In addition to the above broader policies, Amherst College Office of Global Education offers a wide variety of student and faculty information for DEI experiences abroad. Before any international field work or class travel is proposed, this site has resources to begin building an inclusive, thoughtful, program. Specifically, the site includes short videos by students sharing their experiences across a range of identities that is useful for everyone to learn from and perhaps add to for Geology events.

- [Office of Global Education Diversity and Identity Away](#)

The Geology Department is developing its own guidelines as well, and is committed to having them clearly posted in classrooms and around the department to acknowledge the aims and policies to create and maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Some starting ideas for our department, modified from a combination of the URGE example, Oberlin's wonderful list and Smith's as well:

- *Be kind to others and do not insult or put down other group members.*
- *Remember that harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary jokes are not appropriate **EVER**.*
- *Contribute to discussions in meetings **or classes** with a constructive, positive approach*
- *Be mindful of talking over others when discussing in groups, and be willing to hear out the ideas of others.*
  
- *Listen with the possibility of being changed. Speak with the promise of being heard*
- *You have the right to ask for help, and the duty to assist*
- *Everyone has something to learn. Everyone has expertise to offer.*
- *Be willing to experience discomfort.*
- *We need each and every person in this group. Everyone helps.*
- *We will care for our health and well-being and be mindful of the health and well being of others*

Faculty and trip leaders should actively work to foster group cohesion so as to not exclude members from all activities. This includes any physical activities such as hiking, sample collection with hammers, etc. The department is considering low-key events consisting of an overnight camping experience with the idea that this would foster not only community building, but a far less stressful environment for many students to be introduced to certain field work.

### **Processes for Reporting Violations**

- See above for Amherst College reporting links. We do not have a specific reporting procedure for our department yet, but are engaged in working on it.

### **Training Resources**

- Amherst College Center for Teaching and Learning has a number of [programs](#), and links to [resources](#), for building an inclusive classroom and laboratory.

### **Field Work**

#### **● Risk Assessment of Sites**

- Develop a list of field/research experiences and field camps at other institutions that have been vetted to be more inclusive (use feedback from others and solicit feedback in the future).

- o Know who owns the land (Is it public or private? Are there permits?)
- o Provide credentials, vests or visual identifiers, and buddy systems for all students.
- o Check with the Global Education Office for up-to-date information on the site if international.

### ● **Pre-departure Checklist of Discussions within the Field Team**

- o Openly explain the physical requirements of the trip
  - Discuss gear/supplies needed, and have a plan to make sure everyone can access them
  - Give ample opportunities for student to talk one-on-one with the team leader and/or a student who has experience
- o Introduce conversation about “invisible” challenges that opens up communication between students and trip leaders
- o Discuss Code of Conduct and reporting forms
- o Discuss the location across racial/cultural/gendered backdrops
- o Discuss bystander training objectives
- o Discuss learning objectives of trip

### **Laboratory/Research Work**

- o Bring students together for summer research session events
  - Use opportunity to discuss a DEI paper focusing on these issues
    - Ex. [Counteracting Systemic Bias in the Lab, Field and Classroom](#)
- o Discuss learning objectives for summer research
- o Explain resources on campus
- o Introduce not just the direct advisors, but all faculty/staff in the building and x-links for research and exchange of ideas.
- o Make the lab experience less siloed and more inclusive!

### **Other Materials:**

- Example Safety Plan: (Demery & Pipkin, 2021) [www.preprints.org/manuscript/202008.0021](http://www.preprints.org/manuscript/202008.0021)<sup>6</sup>
- Example Code of Conduct: [Basin Research Group](#) (under “Inclusivity and Diversity”)
- More Resources: [https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field\\_work.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field_work.html)
- AGU: [Changing the Culture of Fieldwork in the Geosciences](#)
- Nature: [Safe fieldwork strategies for at-risk individuals, their supervisors and institutions](#)
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<sup>1</sup>R. E. Bernard, E. H. G. Cooperdock, No progress on diversity in 40 years. Nature Publishing Group. 11, 1–5 (2018).

<sup>2</sup><https://notimeforsilence.org/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.change.org/p/geoscientists-call-for-a-robust-anti-racism-plan-for-the-geosciences>

<sup>4</sup>[www.sciencefriday.com/segments/making-outdoors-inclusive](http://www.sciencefriday.com/segments/making-outdoors-inclusive)

<sup>5</sup>J. Anadu, H. Ali, C. Jackson, Ten steps to protect BIPOC scholars in the field, Eos, 101, DOI: [10.1029/2020EO150525](https://doi.org/10.1029/2020EO150525) (2020).

<sup>6</sup>AJ.C. Demery, M.A. Pipkin, Safe fieldwork strategies for at-risk individuals, their supervisors and institutions. Nat Ecol Evol, (2021).