

# URGEO

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



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As the AGU Earth and Planetary Surface Processes Pods 1 and 2, we developed a Safety Plan that includes: 1) a code of conduct as well as a process for reporting violations; 2) training resources and requirements for antidiscrimination, bystander intervention, and de-escalation training; 3) a checklist for racial risk assessment of field sites for AGU EPSP members.

## 1. Code of Conduct (Pod 1 contribution)

### 1. Expected Behavior

- All members must adhere to the code of conduct within the [AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy](#) (Section III, Appendix B).
- Treat others with respect and consideration. Be kind to others and do not put down or insult anyone.
- Be professional, considerate, and collaborative.
- Communicate openly and with respect. Critique ideas, not individuals. Be open and willing to listen to the ideas of others.
- Have empathy for other perspectives and ways of knowing.
- Use and promote [inclusive language](#).
- Ensure that all members of the community are in a safe and welcoming environment. Be aware of your surroundings, acknowledge if someone feels unsafe, and work to minimize risk and potential harm to others. Alert staff or call 911 if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.
- Be an active bystander. Do not leave the burden of speaking up to those that experience inappropriate behavior and/or discrimination.
- Listen to feedback with an open mind and be accountable for your actions.

### 2. Unacceptable Behavior

- Harassment, bullying, intimidation or discrimination will not be tolerated.
- Do not make comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin, or socioeconomic class.

- No inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations.
  - No physical or verbal abuse.
  - No threatening, intimidation or stalking any individual in person or online.
  - Do not make inappropriate or unwelcome physical contact.
  - Do not disrupt presentations or events.
  - Do not consume alcohol or other legal intoxicants to the extent that you cannot remain professional and respectful. This applies to gatherings with colleagues both on- and off-site any event.
3. Consequences
- We expect members asked to stop any harassing behavior to comply immediately.
  - Following [AGU protocol](#), anyone violating the code of conduct may be removed from the meeting and may be banned from future meetings.
4. Reporting violations
- Proposed policy for reporting within AGU EPSP can be found [here](#) (page 8). Complaints can be made to delegates within the DEI committee and will be resolved internally, directed to EPSP leadership, or reported directly to AGU.
  - The [Safe AGU](#) program can assist those who experience harassment, threatening or unsafe behavior at AGU meetings.
  - The AGU Ethics and Equity Center provides [free consultation with a legal advisor](#) for anyone experiencing harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation or other misconduct.
5. Investigative procedures
- The proposed policy outlining investigative procedures for complaints filed to the EPSP DEI committee can be found [here](#) (page 8). Delegates from the DEI committee will handle complaints and work to mediate the issue. This may involve resolving the complaint directly, elevating the complaint to section leadership, or reporting directly to AGU.
  - Complaints filed directly through AGU will follow the investigative procedure within the [AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics](#) (Section VII)
6. Protection against retaliation
- Retaliation will not be tolerated and is considered a violation of the code of conduct.
7. Mechanism for re-evaluation
- To finalize the code of conduct, the EPSP DEI committee should hold an open community comment period and revise following feedback.
  - The document should be re-evaluated regularly by the DEI committee following an open comment period from the community.
  - Any feedback from the community regarding the code of conduct should be directed to and addressed by the DEI committee.

Signatures of Approval by Podlet 1: Katherine Kravitz, Claire Masteller, Anastasia Piliouras, Alison Duvall, Andrew Moodie, Cindy Palinkas, Noah Snyder, Lisa Tranel, Julia Carr, Brandee Carlson, Colin Phillips, Kimberly Hill

## 2. Training Resources and Requirements (Pod 2 contribution)

### Current Workshops and Resources Hosted by AGU and EPSP

#### AGU:

- [AGU Ethics and Equity Center](#)
  - Contains a series of Virtual and In-person [Workshops and Trainings](#) on topics like student organizing, bystander intervention, and diversifying faculty
- AGU [DEI Strategic Plan](#) and [Committee](#):
- AGU [DEI session schedule from 2020 Fall Meeting](#)
- [AGU Bridge Program](#) - a program designed to increase opportunities for underrepresented students
  - Linked with the [Inclusive Graduate Education Network](#) which has [Resources](#) on mentorship, rec. letters, and pandemic grades/admissions and [links](#) to a series of workshops/trainings/resources on mentorship, communication, and admissions.
- AGU [Mentoring Program](#) (and associated links)
- Loads of [AGU Education Section](#) Presentations and Workshops on DEI ([2020 Fall Meeting](#))

#### EPSP:

- Next EPSP Connects: 21 April 2021 - [Building a Supportive Research Community](#) (w/ Podlet 2 Member Julia Cisneros)

### Workshops and Resources Hosted by Partner Organizations

- Being the "Change" in Global Change Science: Promoting a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - Aspen Global Change Institute
  - <https://www.agci.org/event/18s1>
- [No Time for Silence](#)
- [Robust Anti-Racism Plans](#)
- [Request a Woman Scientist](#)
- [Association of Women Geoscientists](#)
- [Environmental Data Science Inclusion Network](#)
- [Earth Science Women's Network](#)
- [National Association of Geoscience Teachers](#) hosts workshops and other professional development opportunities
- Carleton College: Teach the Earth contains resources on:
  - [Broadening Geoscience Participation](#)
  - [Increasing the Diversity of your Graduates](#)
  - Educator Workshops on [Inclusivity](#) and [Bias](#)

Workshops and Resources Hosted by Similar Research Organizations (SEPM, GSA, NSF, etc.)

- GSA:
  - [Anti-Racism Resource Guide](#)
- American Geosciences Institute (AGI)
  - [Framework for Addressing Racism](#)
- International Association for Geoscience Diversity
  - [Growing Database of Resources](#)

## Recommendations

EPSP could post a “Resources” page or something similar, offering easy-to-find links to resources. Currently these links are buried in hard-to-find programs or redirect to partner organizations. Although highlighting these partner organizations is extremely important, searching in this way provides a barrier. Similarly, there are no visible requirements for the completion/creation of anti-discrimination or harassment policies or training. Would potentially be beneficial to link/develop training and resources with the proposed EPSP code of conduct above.

## 3. Racial Risk Assessment of Field Sites for AGU/EPSP members (Pod 2 contribution)

Audit current AGU and EPSP recommendations/resources of best practices for field work/study.

### AGU/EPSP

- AGU/EPSP has non-existent resources.
- EPSP is very broad, so field best practices contributions need to be broad.
- Recognition that resources and trainings exist but are not adequately advertised
- We acknowledge that many voices are absent because many with traumatic field experiences have left the field.

EOS (a magazine associated with AGU) articles about field work best practices:

- Safety (2013):  
<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdfdirect/10.1002/2013EO400002>
- Safety for BIPOC (2020), *opinion article*:  
<https://eos.org/opinions/ten-steps-to-protect-bipoc-scholars-in-the-field>
- Building Culture around Safety (2020)  
<https://eos.org/opinions/building-a-culture-of-safety-and-trust-in-team-science>
- LGBTQ+ in the field(2020)  
<https://eos.org/features/the-challenges-of-fieldwork-for-lgbtq-geoscientists>

Audit broader geosciences communities' recommendations/resources of best practices for field work/study.

A good resource about field safety and inclusivity (lots of good links here):

- [https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field\\_work.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/field_work.html)

NSF

- <http://www.usap.gov/travelanddeployment/documents/FieldManual-AppendixENSPolicyonFieldSafety.pdf>
- <https://www.nsf.gov/geo/opp/pehs/index.jsp>
- <https://www.nsf.gov/geo/opp/pehs/documents/Safety%20and%20Occupational%20Health%20Policy%20PESH.pdf>
- [https://commssite.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/nsf\\_srm\\_report\\_2015\\_reducedsize.pdf](https://commssite.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/nsf_srm_report_2015_reducedsize.pdf)
- Everything looks polar related. Doesn't look like anything is related to harassment or racism

Recommendation based on Audit above

We recommend the creation of a field safety checklist for each research group. EPSP should publicize the need for each group to develop one of these checklists, with examples being easily found on the EPSP website. To encourage creating best practices one option is to offer a certificate for completing the creation of a field safety/best practices checklist and reviewing the resources EPSP will make available about field safety.

Field Checklist

EPSP Recommends that each Research Group develop a "Field Safety Checklist" that ensures both the physical and racial/personal safety of each group member.

Framework:

- This list is intended to be a starting point for your fieldwork/group to discuss field safety.
- We recommend that this checklist reflects each group's community guidelines and code of conduct and is reviewed and revised before each field experience.
  - If a group doesn't have community guidelines or a code of conduct EPSP recommends creating one.
- This checklist should be shared with students/researchers before and during the planning of field experiences. Each researcher should have the opportunity to add their safety concerns and the team should develop a risk mitigation strategy for every concern before engaging in field work.
- Beyond research group fieldwork, we also encourage PIs to engage and discuss field safety checklists with instructors who run field camps and courses.

Suggested content of the field safety checklist:

- (URGE suggestion) Racial risk assessment of sites:
  - <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-020-01328-5>,
  - [https://presentations.copernicus.org/EGU2020/EGU2020-7678\\_presentation.pdf](https://presentations.copernicus.org/EGU2020/EGU2020-7678_presentation.pdf)

- (URGE suggestion) Procedures for documenting incidents in the field
- (URGE suggestion) Required or supported training
- Emphasize participants' right to opt out of field work if they feel uncomfortable that they have the opportunity to gain equivalent experience/credit/data.
- Create a buddy system, and buddies choose each other.
- Check LGBTQ+ policies in location of field work (see EOS article above)
- Reflect on the accessibility of field locations. How can one modify or adapt field plans to ensure all researchers can participate?
- Prepare exercises to practice basic field skills, e.g, navigation, map reading, taking field notes, using compass for various purposes
- Prepare resources for outdoor skills e.g. wilderness camping, weather proofing, hygiene, cooking, leave no trace, animal safety
- Create an emergency contact list. Who can you contact? Who knows the field plan? Encourage a daily/regular check-in policy.
- Define categories of fieldwork environments, or a spectrum of remoteness and the types of things to highlight, what interactions with others are like, e.g. from "in-town" settings where might run into locals stopping in stores or camp sites to Antarctica where it's mostly other scientists, possibly from other countries, staff, crew - stressful conditions for everyone.
- Create a separate pre-departure 'form' that lists and has space to elaborate for accommodation (similar to what we do with dietary preferences now). The accommodations can circulate that to everyone, if the participant wants, which takes the onus of communication personal needs from the attendees.
- Frame fieldwork travel as mutual respect between researchers and community. State up front to participants the potential conflicts or issues they could face in the community (e.g. unusual to see POC/public displays of affection for LGBT+) and give clear directions how to define and report uncomfortable situations. At the same time, emphasize respecting local businesses/nature/infrastructure and list unacceptable behavior (see the session 5 deliverable on working with Indigenous communities)
- Prepare participants with a gear checklist ahead of time and point to resources to acquire gear for free/reduced price. Seek affirmation from participants that they have gear before leaving for the field. Audit gear list regularly for unnecessary gear or gear that can be purchased for the group.
- At least envision an alternate field plan for ill/injured/incapacitated participants, if not plan one all out.
- Encourage bystander intervention training

How can we engage the EPSP community in talking about and adopting these risk-mitigation practices?

“Vignettes” from the field, highlighting both positive and negative field experiences,

- As part of the presentation, the audience should engage with the factors (e.g., privileges, preparation, etc.) that either made these experiences better or worse.

- We encourage that Vignettes are shared in a way that signals to BIPOC that they are not alone in their experiences or clearly state that the intention of vignette is for fieldwork leaders to educate themselves.

#### Funding to create Vignettes (From the EPSP program, AGU, the committee)

- Funding for editing the videos
- Funding for the speakers
- Coordinated by the EPSP DEI committee

#### Sharing the Vignettes with the EPSP community:

- Podcast
- Newsletter
- Videos posted to website
- Popups at Gilbert Club
- EPSP Townhall
- TED-talk style
- EPSP Connects
- Twitter

#### Collection of Vignettes:

- AGU Workshop
  - Similar to creation of case studies in the Montgomery and Bierman Geomorphology textbook
- Twitter

#### Examples of Positive Experiences:

- Designing fieldwork based in urban settings:
  - 'Field experiences do not have to be conducted in remote wilderness areas or require participants to be able-bodied. Opportunities for discovery and learning exist wherever an individual's attention is captured by nature (Dijkstra 2016). Whether a farm, an urban schoolyard or abandoned lot, a suburban lawn, or a park, starting where students are may be a way to broaden participation and inclusivity in ecology and help students who have grown up in these environments understand how complex natural ecosystems within urban landscapes can serve to answer important biological questions' (Morales et al. 2020)
- Fieldwork/study that include 'practice of meaningful interactions with the environment and can create attachment to place (Jolley et al. 2018), strong connections to their cohort (Haywood et al. 2016), and feel part of something larger' (Morales et al. 2020):
  - involve those in experience in the design of the experience (Box 1 in Morales et al. 2020) (i.e. camping vs. staying at hotel)
  - 'Codes of conduct for students, course instructors, researchers, and support staff can clarify inappropriate behaviors, consequences, and reporting routes (but consistency and follow-through by leaders is needed). Cultural competence training for field instructors and students could be a promising way to create inclusive environments and create a sense of belonging to a team during the field experience (Halliwell et al. 2020). Setting expectations in advance can foster inclusivity by helping everyone appreciate that individual and collective identities

influence learning experiences and promote the recognition that there is a demographic skewness that exists in higher education and that favors white, middle-, and upper-class people (Miriti 2019)' (Morales et al. 2020)

- A recording of the Geological Society of London's webinar I attended last month on "Creating Inclusive Fieldwork" is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQPBA8z-NQI>; one thing they discuss is the impact of good communication before/during/after fieldwork and creating an environment to facilitate that

Examples of Negative Experiences:

- An insightful video about a BIPOC's experience (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0B7xwGkI00>)
- Group leaders role model in conversations assumed geology lifestyles, e.g. lifelong marathon running, rock climbing, athletics in general, etc., that alienate others on a spectrum of physical activity.

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