

## **Bucknell University Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences**

### **[Preliminary] Code of Conduct and Safety Plan for Field Trips & Field Work**

#### 1. Community standards of conduct

Our departmental community standards of conduct apply to all departmental activities, including field trips and off-campus locations, and are envisioned as follows: We seek to create a community that is uniformly welcoming to all regardless of race, ethnicity or nationality, gender, gender expression or sexual orientation, belief system, economic status or ability; where every person can have a strong sense of belonging and thrive. We recognize the inherent value of each person in our community and seek to learn from others' lived experiences and diverse perspectives. This requires treating others with respect, active listening, humility and willingness to grow. Recognizing that our discipline has historic and present-day underrepresentation and unequal treatment of minoritized groups, we seek to address the potential causes of this underrepresentation, take actions to enhance the diversity of our community and acknowledge the special burden that is placed on these members of our community.

We seek to provide learning environments in which each individual can be heard and make equal contributions without fear of encountering harassment, hate speech or bias incidents. Each of us must take responsibility for maintaining the community standards of conduct and take action when bias incidents occur or potentially harmful conditions exist or are anticipated. Behavior that runs counter to the community goals outlined above will not be overlooked and will be addressed by reporting incidents through our existing reporting mechanisms and by attending to the immediate and longer term needs of aggrieved community members.

In the field, especially given the sometimes remote and isolated nature of field experiences and the often small, closely interactive group that constitutes the immediate community of field excursions, special care must be paid to this code of conduct. Upholding our shared values and mission is essential to maintain the safety and well-being of all participants on field trips, and behavior must be consistent with these values at all times during field experience. Specific details about maintaining community health and safety and uploading the code of conduct in the field are given below.

#### 2. Safety plan for physical and mental health

As geoscientists, our education and research activities take place in two distinct workspaces, on campus and in the field, and this safety plan focuses on field conditions specifically. The term "field trip" is broadly defined to include off-campus excursions through the department involving faculty, students and sometimes staff; these can include spring break field trips with geology majors, field trips for classes, or field work undertaken as part of faculty-student research.

The following hazardous conditions may be present during field trips, and all participants need to be

aware of these hazards and dangerous conditions and prepare properly to alleviate the impact. This document outlines planning measures the trip organizer should take to address these hazards:

1. Bathroom availability – The trip organizer should plan for daily activities and the participants need to use the bathroom. Most people pee 6–7 times every 24 hours, but normal conditions may warrant as much as 10 times a day. A small bathroom tent should be brought in the field if the site is open (e.g., desert environment with no trees). The organizer should privately survey the participants if they need extra accommodations due to disability and/or health concerns, and budget for and provide necessary accommodations to those with special needs.
2. Highway Safety – To avoid trespassing on private property and to access outcrops exposed in roadcuts, students and faculty may walk adjacent to busy roads. These are public roads and vehicles have the right of way, thus it is imperative that everyone in the trip stays off the roads, and watches for approaching traffic. We will wear safety/high-visibility vests at all times along roads.
3. Sunburn and heat exposure – Warn everyone participating in the field work to bring sunscreen and proper clothing, including sunglasses. Make one tube of unexpired sunscreen available as part of the first-aid kit. Emphasize the importance of hydration and remind participants to bring water.
4. Clothing and Footgear – The trip organizer should anticipate the weather conditions and inform the participants on the appropriate clothing for the trip. Overnight trips would require various types of clothing and the list of clothing should be provided to the participants before the trip, including warm-weather or cold-weather gear, as well as a rain jacket and umbrella. The type of footwear should also be specified depending on the physical work being done in the field. For example, be specific to wear hiking boots or sneakers with good tread, instead of vaguely advertising “to wear appropriate for hiking.” Many people are not familiar with outdoor experience and may suffer unnecessarily due to lack of preparation.
5. Allergies – Survey and ask participants if they have allergies to food, environment, and other conditions. Make sure that the allergic participants bring their required inhalers and/or appropriate antihistamine medication. Pause the trip and acquire the medication before going into the field if it’s discovered that the medication is missing. Make sure to include epipen or other allergy medications in the first-aid kit.
6. Bites – Warn the participants of increased exposure to bites from bees, ticks, mosquitoes, and other animal bites during the outdoor activities. Survey and ask participants if they are allergic to bee stings, or even suspect that they might be. Make sure participants check with their physician and bring a bee sting kit with them on field trips. Advise participants to bring bug repellants to reduce the risk of bites. Budget for and provide spray repellents to participants if the trip is conducted over several days and more. The trip organizers should study and provide information on how to get medical attention in the field in case of severe cases.
7. Evacuation plan – The trip organizer should plan for and budget for evacuation in case of emergency. There should be a clear authority to make the decision whether to evacuate a participant from the trip. The criteria to evacuate a participant should not be limited to physical injury and harm, they should also include harassment and unsafe environment.
8. Inclusion in activities - Daily activities should be planned to be all-inclusive without exception.

Field sites should be chosen that can accommodate different comfort levels with terrain, and students should have the choice over hiking & terrain difficulty. Any full-group activities, such as wrap-up after a field day, should take place in a location accessible to the full group.

9. Field communication - Establish clear communication protocol. For example, make clear what time day should turn on the radios to check in if it's necessary to turn off the equipment to save battery. Plan for the best and uninterrupted communication equipment, taking into account cell service, and test all communication devices prior to leaving campus (satellite phones, radios, batteries etc.).
10. Use and possession of firearms – Strongly avoid bringing firearms into the field. Do not conduct a trip to a place where self-defense may be required. No student should bring a firearm in the field. In case of necessity to protect from wild animals only the members of the trip organizers with strong firearms training should bring one. Establish clear protocols around firearm safety and access.
11. Places with anti-LGBTQ laws – Some countries criminalize LGBTQ people (e.g., see <https://www.humandignitytrust.org/lgbt-the-law/map-of-criminalisation/>). Do not plan a field trip to such countries. Do not ask the field participants if they would be OK going into countries with such discriminatory laws. The trip organizer should never assume the sexual orientation and preferences of participants and make decisions on behalf of them.
12. COVID – We expect students to follow Bucknell University guidelines regarding social distancing, masks, testing and other policies regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Geology & Environmental Geosciences will also be working to implement and follow these policies.
13. Mental health – Trip organizers should alert participants that their mental health is an important part of their overall well being on field trips, and that their concerns will be taken seriously if raised. Mental health crises that warrant a return trip home will be treated the same as a physical medical event and transportation will be covered by the department.

### 3. Reporting

If there is a bias incident of any kind while on a field trip, or if there is a violation of the code of conduct outlined in section one of this document, action should be taken by the trip organizer to ensure the safety of the students. A person (one of the trip organizers) should be clearly designated before the field trip as a safe person to whom concerns can be brought; all communication can be handled anonymously, if necessary. The trip member making the communication of a bias incident or code of conduct violation should first be made aware of all available options, and their comfort level with reporting & subsequent actions should be respected.

#### *In cases where immediate action is necessary:*

In the field, cases may arise where formal reporting procedures are not sufficient to address immediate behaviors. In those cases, the safety of targeted individuals will be the top priority of the field trip organizer. For example, if there is an intended field trip location with racist signage, the trip leader should consider modifying the destination to ensure the safety and comfort of all participants. If there is an incident among participants on the field trip, individuals are expected to comply immediately with requests to stop any harassing behavior. If the behavior continues, the trip organizer will separate

individuals identified involved in the harassing behavior. Any participant involved in serious code of conduct violations will be permanently removed from the field situation.

*Reporting guidelines:*

Depending on the incident and the desires of the victim, Bucknell's formal reporting procedure may be followed. Go to <https://www.bucknell.edu/life-bucknell/health-wellness-safety/bias-incident-policy> for information about different reporting contacts for bias toward/from students, bias toward/from employees and guests, sexual misconduct, and hate crimes. It also includes forms for anonymous reporting of bias incidents and links to policy documents that describe categories of violations.

The responsibility of Bucknell geology department members to report misconduct and safety violations varies based on the nature of the complaint. Some reporting is governed by state and federal regulations while other reporting is governed by rules in the Faculty and Staff Handbooks. There are requirements for reporting sexual misconduct and child abuse that extend beyond Bucknell's internal rules.

The federal regulations regarding mandatory reporting of sexual misconduct have been in flux over the past several years (as of this writing in 2021). Generally, faculty and staff at Bucknell have been mandated reporters of sexual misconduct under Title IX, and we as a department will continue that practice.

When a student approaches a geology department member to discuss sexual misconduct, the member should advise the student that they will be reporting the incident, including the identity of the reporting student, to the Title IX coordinator on campus. Reports can be filed online at [www.bucknell.edu/TitleIX](http://www.bucknell.edu/TitleIX). The department member should emphasize that that is the only office on campus that will receive the report and that the Title IX coordinator will reach out to the student before proceeding with any action. Beyond the mandatory reporting, the department member will not communicate or share any information with others if the sexual misconduct involves only students. If, however, the misconduct involves employees of Bucknell, the event may also be reported to Bucknell Human Resources department. Incidents involving alleged criminal activity or presenting a safety concern can also be reported to Bucknell Public Safety, 570-577-1111 (emergency) or 570-577-3333 (non-emergency).

In Pennsylvania, University employees are mandated reporters of child abuse and must report suspected abuse within 24 hours. Additional information on Pennsylvania rules is available here - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/>. Additional information on Bucknell's reporting policy is available on the General Counsel's website <https://www.bucknell.edu/azdirectory/general-counsel>. The department member should file an electronic report at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis) or by calling ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313. Employees should not delay reporting, but may consult with their supervisor or the Office of General Counsel. In the case of imminent danger to a child, the department member should call 911.

If an employee approaches another employee about sexual misconduct or other safety issues, the department member receiving the report should suggest that the employee contact Bucknell Human Resources and offer to support the employee in that process. These processes are governed by the Bucknell Faculty Handbook and the Bucknell Staff Handbook as well as federal and state law.