



Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



UBURGE DELIVERABLE 4: FIELD WORK SURVEY AUDIT AND POLICIES FOR WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Audit of UB Geology faculty field work survey

The UBURGE Pod surveyed 17 faculty members and received responses from 6 individuals (35% response rate). A summary of the survey questions and representative responses is included below:

Question 1: Do you conduct field work?

100% of survey respondents answered “yes”

Question 2: Does your fieldwork involve interaction with communities of color, either domestically or internationally?

5 faculty members answered “yes” and 1 faculty member answered “no.”

Question 3: If yes, can you briefly describe these interactions? What was your relationship with these communities?

Of the five “yes” responses in Question 2, representative answers to Question 3 included:

- Hire people as field guides or to help with field logistics
- Collaborate with local researchers
- Conduct research in communities of color

Question 4: Have these relationships been reciprocal? How have you given back to these communities? In ways outside of sharing your research?

Four out of five responses said that these relationships are reciprocal. Examples include:

- Outreach in schools
- Recruiting students from the community, serving as a mentor
- Giving away/selling field equipment

Question 5: Have you included local communities in your broader impacts in a meaningful way that builds on the community's identified needs and concerns?

Of the six responses received, half of those surveyed answered "yes" and half responded "no."

Question 6: Have you actively sought out local collaborators / liaisons / guides / worked with local students? Why or why not? If yes, have you sought to maintain these relationships over multiple years/field seasons? After the grant was over?

Six out of six faculty members responded "yes." Five out of six specified that these relationships are long-term and ongoing. However, some noted that maintaining these relationships is difficult and time consuming after a grant is over.

Question 7: Have you shared data and findings with the local/regional community in a way that is more accessible? (i.e., translating into different languages).

Out of 5 responses to this question, three faculty members answered "yes" and two answered "no".

Question 8: Have you educated yourself and your group/team about local politics, culture, customs, and knowledge, including the history of colonialism / settler colonialism in the region? Why or why not?

Four faculty members answered "yes" and two answered "no". Faculty members that responded "yes" do so because local politics, culture, customs, knowledge, etc. are important to their interactions and long-term relationships. Faculty members that responded "no" said that this information is often difficult to find, and they are rewarded for spending their time on other things.

Question 9: Have you acknowledged local communities / Indigenous tribes in your research?

Three faculty members responded "yes", two responded "no", and one responded "N/A".

Question 10: Have you considered and prioritized research questions and research locations based on needs of local communities, in addition to how impactful they are seen within academia?

Five out of six respondents answered “yes”.

Question 11: We encourage you to reflect on past interactions - what were the motivations behind them? Were you able to give anything meaningful to these communities? (No need to respond if you don't want - this can serve as an opportunity to reflect.)

Three responses received, and are intentionally excluded here to preserve anonymity

Question 12: Are there specific resources, guidelines, training, or support that the department and/or university could provide that would improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color? Have you used any such resources before?

Representative responses include the following:

- Reduced responsibilities for faculty to be able to prioritize building better relationships with communities of color
- A dedicated administrator who is trained in community engagement
- Additional money and resources to build stronger outreach programs

Tasks for all UB Geology members to acknowledge issues:

- Include a land acknowledgement on the UB Geology website. This could be adapted/modified from the UB land acknowledgement (<https://www.buffalo.edu/inclusion/strategic-initiatives/indigenous-inclusion.html>)
“We would like to begin by acknowledging the land on which the University at Buffalo operates, which is the territory of the Seneca Nation, a member of the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations Confederacy. This territory is covered by The Dish with One Spoon Treaty of Peace and Friendship, a pledge to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. It is also covered by the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, between the United States Government and the Six Nations Confederacy, which further affirmed Haudenosaunee land rights and sovereignty in the State of New York. Today, this region is still the home to the Haudenosaunee people, and we are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and share ideas in this territory.”

- Encourage all faculty, students, and post-docs publishing their work to acknowledge the communities on whose land they are working in presentations, publications, and on websites, etc (<https://native-land.ca/>). Consider providing appropriate links, such as data collection on indigenous lands on home websites.

Tasks for UB Geology members to help address

issues:

- Have faculty, staff, post-docs, and students review URGE readings on these topics (<https://urgeoscience.org/session-4-racism-and-justice/>), and discuss during lab group meetings
- Review work ongoing at the university level (<https://www.buffalo.edu/inclusion.html>)
- Recommend department hire more administrative staff to take some of the time burden off of faculty, allowing them to devote time to EDI initiatives.
- Encourage all UB Geology members to participate in the UBURGE pod in the future

Tasks for UB Geology to help to engage communities of color

- Creating a guide for best practices for working with communities of color
 - We hope to prioritize efforts in creating and curating a book of guidelines and resources for faculty members and students engaging communities of color during their research activities. The guide aims to emphasize the best practices in community engagement and raise awareness of various existing issues. It can also incorporate knowledge-sharing and reflection of previous experiences by UB geology members.
- Self-education before fieldwork
 - In addition to the guide, we strongly encourage self-education about the culture and language of the region where the scientific activity takes place.
- Give input to NSF/other funding agencies
 - We anticipate senior faculty members to actively engage with various funding agencies and initiate efforts in shaping the future framework/directorate for science communication and outreach.
- Integrate awareness into teaching/lab materials

- We urge faculty members/graduate students with teaching responsibility to include materials accentuating nuanced voices and facts of local indigenous communities.
- Examples include:
 - providing Greenlandic names for glaciers and sharing the indigenous perspective on the glacier
 - integrating incidences of significant impact on minority communities due to industrial pollution.
 - Including URGE readings in GLY501 and lab group meetings
- Work on maintaining relationships with communities
 - We encourage faculty members to prioritize opportunities more likely to develop long-term relationships with communities of color during the early planning stage
 - We encourage efforts in maintaining connections and revisiting after the research.
 - Examples include:
 - Participating in local cultural events and food sharing
 - Donating equipment
 - Supporting local business