

UW-Madison Department of Geoscience Code of Conduct

Preamble: Why have a Code of Conduct?

Formulating and implementing a code of conduct (1) Serves as a collective recognition by members of a profession of its responsibilities, (2) Can help create an environment in which ethical behavior is the norm, (3) Can serve as a guide or reminder in specific situations, and (4) Can serve as an educational tool, providing a focal point for discussion in classes and meetings. Moreover, the process of developing and maintaining a code indicates to others that the body formulating it is seriously concerned with responsible, professional conduct (Center for Study of Ethics in the Professions, ADVANCEGeo; AGU Ethics).

This Code applies to all community members of the UW-Madison Department of Geoscience (Faculty, Staff, Graduate and Undergraduate Students) as well as to collaborators on UW-Madison Department of Geoscience initiatives or projects. See **Appendix I: Key definitions** for a list of terms used in this document.

I. Guiding Principles

The goal of the guidelines and resources presented in this document are to reinforce positive mental and physical safety in the Departmental environment, consistent with key areas of University policy and Federal, State, and Local law.

The Department of Geoscience at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is committed to creating and promoting a community where diversity is welcomed and nurtured. Our Department D&I statement voices our intention to foster a healthy and safe community for all individuals regardless of their professional status, diversity of age, race, ethnicity, gender and expression, sexuality, physical ability, immigration status, marital status, class, religion/spirituality, political ideology, or other social identity.

Additionally, we value respectful behavior that promotes mental and physical health and safety of our community members and visitors on campus and also for departmental events and field experiences that occur off campus. We are committed to pursuing research and education responsibly and ethically and in accordance with institutional policies and local, state, and federal laws. The following expectations and resources are intended to facilitate a culture of safety and accountability to support and enrich our community of research and learning.

II. Policies & Expectations

Treat others with professional courtesy, equity and fairness

- Department community members and collaborators will adhere to UW-Madison policies (see Appendix II), including those on sexual harassment, harmful and intimidating behavior.
- All communications from members of the department should be appropriate for a professional audience. Biased, harassing, racist or other disrespectful language and imagery is not appropriate.

- Department members and visitors should be treated fairly and standards for assessment of performance should be applied equally.
- Hostile working environments are not acceptable. All Department members should behave conscientiously regarding power dynamics between faculty, staff, and students.

Pursue science responsibly and ethically

- Research will be carried out ethically and with integrity, in adherence with [UW-Madison Research Compliance and Ethics Policy](#).
- Individuals should be personally accountable for their actions.

Act in accordance with legal and institutional compliance

- All members of the Department are expected to follow University policies for proper [workplace behavior](#), [safety protocols](#), and [ethical research practices](#).
- All members of the Department are expected to follow federal, state, and local laws.
- In keeping with the spirit of other policies (i.e., [UW-Madison Whistleblower Law](#), [UW-Madison Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence](#)) that explicitly address anti-retaliation, we respect the right of individuals or groups to file complaints about the departmental climate or violations of this code without retaliation.

Promote and practice physical workplace safety

- Adherence to all UW-Madison safety policies is expected (e.g. [driving/travel](#), [lab/chemical](#), [PPE](#), [radiation safety](#)).
- Safety culture and responsibility is a group effort, with each individual playing a key part. However, leaders in research group, field, or class settings should endeavor to model proactive behavior and are responsible for integrating safe work practices into their instructional and research plans and training new lab users.

Do not engage in [sexual harassment](#) & [bullying](#)

- The Department of Geoscience does not tolerate sexual harassment. All Department members and collaborators will comply with the [UW-Madison Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence](#) which states a prohibition of “acts of sexual harassment and sexual violence (including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and sexual exploitation)”.
- All department members will comply with the [UW-Madison Policy on Consensual Relationships](#) between members of the university community where a conflict of interest or power differential between the parties exists.
- All Department members and collaborators will comply with [UW-Madison Policy on Hostile and Intimidating Behavior](#) which strictly prohibits behavior that creates a hostile and/or intimidating work environment (i.e., bullying).
- Practice allyship and bystander intervention by calling out inappropriate behavior towards others and help to mediate situations that arise using the “three D’s”: [Direct](#), [Distract](#), or [Delegate](#).

Promote an inclusive working environment

- All department members and collaborators should comply with [Regent Policy Document 14-6](#) on Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation that seeks to provide an environment free of discrimination, harassment and retaliation.

Practice and promote appropriate field conduct

Field experiences are a core part of many educational, research, and community building activities in the Department of Geoscience. Field settings present unique challenges, including remoteness, unfamiliar or challenging surroundings, and prolonged personal interactions. The field is an extension of our workplace, and all University and Departmental standards of conduct apply in the field as they do on campus. Notably, [UW-Madison Policy on Alcohol and Controlled Substances](#) applies to all off-campus trips.

To create a field environment conducive to the maintaining standards of conduct and safety for all participants, we encourage the following concrete preparations for field excursions:

- The group leader convenes a pre-trip meeting to address participant questions / concerns and discuss logistics such as:
 - Anticipated sleeping, bathroom, and eating arrangements, accounting for common concerns such as dietary restrictions and gender identity;
 - Physical and other environmental conditions requiring preparation, and expectations for and availability of equipment;
 - Potential challenges with local norms or laws at the field site;
 - Expectations for conduct and compliance among group members;
 - Discussion of concerns and questions raised by any of the field team members.
- Accommodations for individual needs. Confidential accommodations requests can be made to the group leader.
- Emergency and group communication plans should be made and shared with all participants. Group leaders should have confidential access to participant emergency contacts.
- All participants should have equitable access to communication devices when in the field for medical and non-medical emergencies.
- Up to date first aid experience or training for at least one participant per trip, preferably a group leader. A group medical kit should be made available to all participants.

IV. Reporting & Remediation

It is the intent of the UW-Geoscience Community to address conduct that does not adhere to the expectations detailed above for the benefit of the whole community. Inappropriate conduct may be addressed with corrective action and disciplinary measures using a combination of resources both within and beyond the Department ([see Appendix II: University Policies & Reporting](#)). The Department of Geoscience encourages conflict resolution at the lowest level possible, consistent with [Section A.5 of the Graduate Student Handbook](#). In the event that involved parties cannot resolve a conflict amongst themselves, individuals can report concerns to the Department Chair (Brad Singer). Students can also seek advice from the Graduate and Undergraduate Program Manager (Lisa Theo), the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee (Mike Cardiff), the Department Manager and Administrator (Michelle Szabo), or the Department Ombuds (Andrea Dutton and Luke Zoet) as appropriate. For matters involving sexual harassment, sexual violence, and discrimination, individuals should directly report to the [Office of Compliance](#).

Possible consequences for inappropriate conduct by Faculty and Staff

- Conduct may be sanctioned pursuant to University policies and procedures:
 - [Faculty policies and procedures](#)
 - [Academic staff policies and procedures](#)

- Employee code of ethics (Board of Regents)
- Faculty and academic staff code of ethics (Wisconsin Legislature)
- As appropriate and as allowed within university policy (see above) consequences at the departmental level may include but are not limited to:
 - Negative performance evaluations translating to loss of any merit raise and/or loss of access to endowments or discretionary funds (e.g., access to Weeks exercise funds), for a period of time;
 - Loss of access to departmental funds for TA/RA for student recruitment for a period of time;
 - Loss of ability to recruit new grad students or supervise undergraduate students for a period of time;
 - Required training in relevant workshops or courses;
 - Unpaid leave, or in severe cases, termination, following existing [policies and procedures](#).
- For collaborators or visitors, sanctions may include a ban from access to the department or shared resources.

Possible consequences for inappropriate conduct for Students

- Conduct may be sanctioned pursuant to University policies and procedures:
 - Student non academic misconduct policy + procedures
 - Student academic policies and procedures
- Consequences may include actions similar to the following, as appropriate or allowed within University policy:
 - Loss of access to departmental resources (e.g., travel funds, merit fellowships) for a period of time;
 - Removal from a particular course or exercise, and associated academic consequences;
 - Written reprimand, suspension or expulsion in accordance with [policies and procedures of the UW System](#).

V. Assessment & Evaluation of Code of Conduct

This code will be publicly available on the Department website and disseminated via electronic communication to all Department members at the start of each academic year, including undergraduate students (see Appendix IV: Syllabus Language). This code should also be referenced or shared with visiting collaborators. The specifics of this code will be reviewed and updated bi-annually by the D&I committee, or more frequently as needed. Updates will be made by a D&I group containing faculty, student, and staff representation. Changes will be ratified by full department vote.

Appendix I: Key Definitions

Discrimination is conduct that adversely affects any aspect of an individual's employment, education, or participation in an institution's activities or programs, or has the effect of denying equal privileges or treatment to an individual on the basis of that individual's protected status or another category as defined in this policy.

Discriminatory Harassment: is a form of discrimination consisting of unwelcome verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct that:

1. is directed at an individual or group of individuals on the basis of the individual or group of individuals' actual or perceived protected status, or affiliation or association with person(s) within a protected status (as defined above); and
2. is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to interfere with an individual's employment, education or academic environment or participation in institution programs or activities and creates a working, learning, or living environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, offensive or hostile.

Sexual harassment: Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. *Quid pro quo sexual harassment*
 - a. An employee of the university conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the institution directly or indirectly on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
 - b. An employee of the university either explicitly or implicitly conditions the provision of an academic, professional, or employment-related opportunity, aid, benefit, or service on the complainant's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. *Hostile environment sexual harassment.* Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature directed towards a student, an employee, or a person participating in a program or activity of the university that, when using the legal "reasonable person" standard:
 - a. is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies the person equal access to the institution's [education program or activity](#);
 - b. is so severe or pervasive and objectively offensive that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or participation in an [university sponsored or supported activity](#).

Hostile and Intimidating Behavior: Hostile and intimidating behavior is defined as unwelcome behavior pervasive or severe to the extent that it makes the conditions for work inhospitable and impairs another person's ability to carry out his/her responsibilities to the university, and that does not further the University's academic or operational interests. A person or a group can perpetrate this behavior. The person need not be more senior than or a supervisor to the target. Unacceptable behavior may include, but is not limited to:

- Abusive expression (including spoken, written, recorded, visual, digital, or nonverbal, etc.) directed at another person in the workplace, such as derogatory remarks or epithets that are outside the range of commonly accepted expressions of disagreement, disapproval, or critique in an academic culture and professional setting that respects free expression;
- Unwarranted physical contact or intimidating gestures;
- Conspicuous exclusion or isolation having the effect of harming another person's reputation in the workplace and hindering another person's work;

- Sabotage of another person's work or impeding another person's capacity for academic expression, be it oral, written, or other;
- Abuse of authority, such as using threats or retaliation in the exercise of authority, supervision, or guidance, or impeding another person from exercising shared governance rights, etc.

Please refer to the [UW-Madison policy on HIB](#) to learn more about HIB and how to address it.

Mandatory Reporting: All UW community members are mandated to report sexual assault involving a student. Certain UW employees are mandated as 'Responsible Employees' to report other violations of the [UW-Madison Policy on Sexual Harassment](#) (see [UW-Madison Compliance Office](#) for further description).

Near Miss: An incident in which no property was damaged and no personal injury was sustained, but where, given a slight shift in time or position, damage or injury easily could have occurred ([OSHA](#)).

Collaborator: Any person that is not a member of the Department of Geoscience working with faculty, staff, and/or students to advance the research, educational, or administrative missions of the department.

Appendix II: University Policies & Reporting

There are resources and individuals in the Department of Geoscience as well as across UW-Madison that are committed to helping resolve conflicts within our community.

POLICIES

Physical Workplace Safety

- [UW-Madison Chemical Safety](#)
- [UW-Madison PPE Policy](#)
- [UW-Madison Radiation Safety](#)
- [UW-Madison Research Compliance and Ethics](#)
- [UW-Madison Driver Authorization](#)
- [UW-Madison Policy on Alcohol and Controlled Substances](#)

Sexual Harassment & Hostile and Intimidating Behavior (HIB)

- [UW-Madison Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence](#)
- [UW-Madison Policy on Consensual Relationships](#)
- [UW-Madison Policy on Hostile and Intimidating Behavior](#)

REPORTING

General:

- Graduate and Undergraduate Program Manager – Lisa Theo
- Department Manager & Administrator – Michelle Szabo
- Department of Geoscience Ombuds -- 2024-2025: Andrea Dutton & Luke Zoet
- Department of Geoscience Chair -- 2024-2025: Michael Cardiff
- [UW-Madison Ombuds \(confidential\)](#)
- [UW-Madison Police Department](#) or 911 if emergency
- UW-Madison [Report an Incident](#) (for Student of Concern, Bias or hate incident, Sexual Assault, Hazing, Dating/Domestic Violence, Stalking, Missing Student, Accessibility barriers, general complaint/Concern (non-bias), misconduct, academic complaint)

Reporting on Physical Workplace Safety

- The Department Chair and Administrator and EHS should be contacted for assessment and assistance in the event of [reportable incidents](#) or [near misses](#).
- [UW Madison Injury and Incident Reporting Forms & Procedures](#) (includes [Near Miss and Unsafe Condition Report](#))

Reporting Sexual Harassment & Hostile and Intimidating Behavior (HIB)

- [UW Madison Sexual Misconduct Reporting Requirements](#)
- [UW Madison HIB Reporting Options](#)

Equity/Bias Incidents

- [UW Madison Bias/Hate Incident Reporting Page](#)
- [Civil Rights Investigations](#)

General Conflict Resolution

- [Geoscience Graduate Student Handbook Section A.5 "Conflict Resolution"](#)
- Department of Geoscience Graduate Studies Chair (2024-2025 Shaun Marcott)
- [UW-Madison Graduate Schools "Grievances and Appeals" Process](#)
- The Dean of Students office is ready and able to assist undergraduate and graduate students (see, e.g., <https://students.wisc.edu/>).
- Graduate students also have the option to discuss issues with the office of the [Dean of the Graduate School](#). Also see: <https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/#reporting-incidents>

- [UW-Madison Whistleblower Law](#)
- [Crisis Intervention Strategies](#)

Appendix III: Additional Links and Resources

Department of Geoscience Diversity and Inclusion Committee

- [Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#) - Membership is open to any geoscience faculty, staff, and students (graduate and undergraduate). Working with the Department, the committee will: 1) Continue to collect information regarding trends in diversity and departmental climate; 2) Provide a forum for identifying and addressing any systemic issues related to diversity and inclusion within the department; and 3) connect resources to individuals with concerns about diversity and inclusion within the department. The e-mail listserv for the full committee is geo-divein@geology.wisc.edu. If you would like to be added to this listserv or have questions or other matters that you would like to bring to our attention, please contact Laurel Goodwin (laurel@geology.wisc.edu).

HR and Compliance Links

- [UW Madison Office of Compliance](#)
- [UW Madison Graduate Assistant Policies](#)
- [Academic Staff Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Faculty Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct](#)
- [Office of Secretary of Faculty Governance and Workplace Challenges](#)

Diversity and Inclusion Links

- [UW Madison Ombuds](#)
- [UW Madison Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)
 - [Specific resources for Faculty and Staff](#)
 - [Graduate Assistants Equity Workshops](#)
 - [Multicultural Graduate Network](#)
 - [L&S EDI Hub](#)

Geo-Ethics Links

- [AGU Ethics Portal](#)
- [ADVANCEGeo](#)
- [American Geosciences Institute: Guidelines for Ethical Professional Conduct](#)
- [Center for Study of Ethics in the Professions](#)
- [Geological Society of America: Code of Conduct](#)
- [American Association for Petroleum Geologists: Code of Ethics](#)
- [Restorative Dialogue Guidelines Example](#)
- The National Science Foundation has recently introduced policies for reporting harassment or discrimination of any kind in the context of NSF-sponsored research; see <https://www.nsf.gov/od/odi/harassment.jsp>.

Mental Health Links

- [UW HR Confidential Mental Health Services](#)
- [University Health Services](#)

Field Best Practices

- [ADVANCEGeo field guides](#)

Appendix IV: Syllabus Language for Geoscience Courses

Department Code of Conduct

The UW-Madison Department of Geoscience expects all faculty, staff, teaching assistants, students, and visitors to abide by its code of conduct, as a respectful and professional environment is vital to scientific productivity and educational success. Please familiarize yourself with the code of conduct here (<https://geoscience.wisc.edu/dept-geoscience-code-of-conduct/>). If you have questions about the code of conduct or would like to talk to someone about violations of the code of conduct, please contact the Department Ombuds or Department Chair, or any other key contacts listed in the code.