



# Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

WWU Geology Department Pod

## URGE Resource Map for Western Washington University Geology Department

This is a draft Resource Map for the Geology Department at Western Washington University (WWU Geology). The Resource Map is meant to provide guidance and resources for anyone newly arriving to the WWU community, but particularly for BIPOC students and faculty/research staff. For students, both undergraduate and graduate, our plan is to develop this resource map into a document that can be easily found on our website. It will also be provided as soon as students declare the major (undergraduate) or have accepted an offer of admission (graduate student). Note: our highest graduate student degree is an MS. For faculty, the document would be provided during the hiring process by the search-committee chair. **Text in red** indicates planned improvements.

- Mentoring plan
  - We currently do not have an official mentoring plan for new faculty, but there is a new-faculty professional development series provided by the university that includes research-based practices for teaching and mentoring. This is a good place for new faculty to develop relationships with their new peers and to learn about resources that the university provides. It is also a forum for faculty to learn about our student demographics.
  - For new graduate students, there is also a professional development series provided by the college on research-based best practices for teaching and mentoring. We plan to apply to be an AGU Bridge site, but we know that we still have some work to do to create our plan to provide the best mentoring possible. Graduate students have their closest mentoring relationship with their thesis committee, but also a new graduate-student success committee works with students to promote their wellness and strategies for success.
  - For undergraduates, the mentoring plan is the connection with a faculty advisor as soon as they declare their major. As discussed in a previous deliverable, this mentorship is not evenly provided across the department and will be a focus of improvement over the next year. **Planned improvement: creation of a student-advicing guide for faculty**
  - We do not have rubrics or metrics of success for faculty mentoring. For graduate students, this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year that the success committee has administered surveys that provide the needed data for facilitating change.

- Core Geology Department Resources

- Department norms – the Geology Department has an annual “All Hands meeting” where norms of behavior/communication are developed. Our first All Hands meeting created the 2020-21 norms which are shared in classes, **but have not yet been posted on our department website.**
- Reporting policy: A full reporting policy is provided in Unit II deliverables. The link to this reporting policy can be found at the bottom of the Geology Department Equity and Inclusion Page, and is also [linked directly here](#). A description of what is bias incident is, and the college-level reporting can be found [here](#)
- Equipment: the WWU Geology Department has a functioning “Gear Library” for items needed for field trips and field camp. This includes hiking boots, warm clothes, tents, sleeping bags, sleeping pads and other general camping/hiking gear.
- Community Ambassadors: Each department in the College of Science and Engineering has at least one faculty member and one student who serve as [Community Ambassadors](#) whose role is to foster a more inclusive and equitable space for all by acting as liaisons between students, staff, faculty, and the Dean of the College and they seek to engage in issues around advocacy, equity, and diversity in STEM.
- Mailing lists: the Geology Department has a listserv that all students, staff, and faculty are automatically signed up for once joining the department, either by declaring a major or being accepted/hired. Graduate students are also linked by their own mailing list that is administered by the owned by Geology department, and includes membership of one faculty member from the graduate student success committee. Graduate students also have a resources/information Canvas site administered by the Graduate school. **In progress: creating a Canvas site for undergraduate opportunities/messaging.**
- Research opportunities for undergraduates:
  - SACNAS quarterly meet-and-greets between faculty and undergraduates to promote research opportunities
  - Annual [Scholars Week](#) for presentation of student research and creative activities.
  - Within the Geology Department, the pathway for undergraduates to get involved in research is currently a mix of reaching out by faculty and students asking for opportunities. **To make this more equitable, we have brainstormed the following easily implementable ideas: 1) create a department “job board” advertising for research assistants, 2) use one of our weekly Geology Lunch talk slots each quarter to showcase opportunities, 3) Create a “best practices” document with equitable undergraduate recruitment procedures for research opportunities**
- Internal funding for research, conference and workshop attendance
  - Funding is available for undergraduate and graduate students for research costs and for attending conferences. Information is provided [here](#).



- Western Involvement Network: <https://win.wvu.edu>
  - WWU Pop-up Food Pantry: <https://as.wvu.edu/sairc/whole/>
- Whatcom County and Bellingham-based support and mental health resources
  - Barbershops & Salons that work on non-white hair
    - Miraculous Braidz & Beauty: <https://www.facebook.com/Miraculousbraidz/>
    - Ashley Norton, LGBTQ+ and mixed friendly, can cut curly/mixed/Black hair <https://www.solasalonstudios.com/salon-professional/ashley-norton>
  - Black-Owned Restaurants and Businesses: See [list](#) on this site:
  - Whatcom Civil Rights Project: <http://www.whatcomcivilrightsproject.org>
  - Tribal links:
    - Lummi Nation: <https://www.lummi-nsn.gov>
    - Nooksack Tribe: <https://nooksacktribe.org>
  - Mental Health resources
    - [NAMI mental health resources](#): Black, Indigenous & People of Color mental health resources:
    - [Accent counseling](#) in Bellingham, recommended by students
    - Psychology Today find a therapist: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>
  - Churches in Bellingham that are safe for POC and LGBTQ+ folks (**incomplete list**)
    - Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship <https://wp.buf.org/>
  - The Mountaineers, [fighting racism in the outdoors](#)
- Skillset support resources
  - For students:
    - [Hacherl Research and Writing Studio](#): Support for research, reading and writing across all subjects.
    - The student run Diversity in Geosciences (DIG) group meets weekly and provides support resources
    - SACNAS
    - All required coding skills are taught in classes
    - A GIS course is a required part of the introductory sequence upon entrance to the major/minor and provides the basis for what is needed in all subsequent courses in the major
  - For Faculty:
    - New faculty workshop for teaching
    - Research support resources are usually from outside WWU (professional communities)
- Professional development resources
  - For students
    - AEG student organization
    - Graduate students – TA professional development workshops in first year

- For faculty
  - Teaching professional development:
    - Science, Math, and Technology Education (SMATE) center workshops including the annual [Slesnick symposium](#)
    - [WWU Center for Instructional Innovation](#) (A lifesaver during the transition to remote instruction!!!)
    - Funding from the Geology Department to attend teaching-focused workshops
  - Guiding documents (rights and responsibilities, especially for tenure, promotion, retention):
    - [WWU faculty handbook](#)
    - [WWU Collective bargaining agreement](#) (this supersedes all unit evaluation plans):
    - [CSE College Operations and Evaluation Plan](#) (COPEP)
    - [Geology Department Addendum to the COPEP](#)
  - Newly implemented [Harassment and Discrimination Prevention training](#) is now required for all faculty and staff
- For all
  - Weekly Geology lunch talks on Fridays (usually internal presenters) and Tuesday seminars for external presenters. Graduate students present a thesis proposal presentation to their thesis committee, an update to the Geo-department community in the beginning of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year, and a thesis defense presentation when they are turning in their thesis.
  - [Bystander Intervention webinar](#) (produced by Washington State Department of Enterprise Services)
- Outreach resources
  - For students, weekly Diversity in Geoscience (DIG) group meetings provide opportunities for students who want to be engaged in belonging, accessibility, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work.
  - For faculty, a mechanism to provide compensation for this kind of activity is lacking. This is a topic for improvement during the AY2021-22
  - Small honoraria and modest travel expense costs are provided for external speakers visiting WWU

List of resources that our URGE group is working would like to see enacted by the department

- For students – Department Canvas Page that has easy access to all department resources, and does not need to be controlled by one webmaster.
- Connecting students/faculty with alumni. Professional mentors for students.
- Reach out to new multicultural center director - affinity groups for new faculty/staff

List of resources that our URGE group would like to see enacted by the university/surrounding community

- Funded de-escalation training/ Western de-escalation team (as an alternative to campus police)
  - Mitigation team (people who are trained in de-escalation techniques)
  - Alternatives to working with law enforcement: e.g., <https://dontcallthepolice.com>
- Currently there is nothing listed for Bellingham