

The University of Georgia Department of Geology Code of Conduct

Introduction: This Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behavior for everyone affiliated with the Department of Geology at the University of Georgia. This policy aims to ensure a respectful, inclusive, and productive academic environment for everyone while promoting excellence in teaching, research, and service.

- 1. Respectful and Inclusive Behavior:** Treat everyone with respect, regardless of their background, identity, or beliefs. Cultivate an inclusive environment where diversity is valued. Promote equitable opportunities for learning and advancement. Be respectful and open-minded when engaging in constructive dialogue, even in disagreement.
- 2. Academic Integrity:** Adhere to the University of Georgia Academic Honesty Policy by upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. Do not engage in any form of dishonesty such as plagiarism or cheating in research, teaching, or learning. Attribute all sources in academic work by providing accurate citations.
- 3. Professional Conduct:** All interactions within the academic community, whether in the classroom or the field, must be conducted in a professional and ethical manner. Adhere to the highest ethical standards in data collection, reporting, and analysis. Do not falsify or misrepresent findings. Obtain permission to use, share or publish data. Do not engage in any form of harassment, discrimination, or bullying, and report such incidents promptly through the appropriate channels (see Code #7). Uphold confidentiality and respect privacy regarding sensitive information in personal and academic matters.
- 4. Collaboration and Cooperation:** Promote a culture of shared knowledge and growth by open and positive collaboration with students, faculty, staff, and colleagues. Acknowledge and respect the intellectual property and contributions of others in collaborative work. Provide constructive feedback and support to foster the academic and professional development of colleagues and students.
- 5. Responsible Communication:** Communicate professionally and respectfully in all forms of communication. Use communication platforms responsibly and avoid offensive and inappropriate language or content.
- 6. Teaching and Learning Environment:** Foster an engaging and inclusive learning environment that encourages active participation and diverse perspectives. Respect the academic freedom of all and allow the open exchange of ideas within the bounds of respectful discourse.
- 7. Reporting Violations:** Violations of this Code of Conduct must be reported to the designated department contact or Department Head promptly, or immediately if the violation deems it necessary. Violations can be reported to the Associate Dean in manners involving the Department Head. Chain of Command contact cards will be provided to all members of the Department of Geology. Individuals reporting violations in good faith will have whistleblower protections from retaliation.
- 8. Consequences of Violations:** Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary actions, which may include but are not limited to dismissal from a course, field experience, research group, etc., or other appropriate measures as deemed by the department and university. Further disciplinary action, including academic or legal consequences, may be taken for serious violations.

Fieldwork raises several unique considerations, and the following are specific to fieldwork activities and experiences.

The University of Georgia Department of Geology is committed to the highest standards of safety and ethics when conducting field activities. Fieldwork is critical to research and education in geology, and this policy is enacted to protect the well-being of all participants, the environment, and the department's reputation. All students, faculty, staff, and collaborators engaged in these activities must abide by this policy.

1. Safety and Health: Safety is always our highest priority. Follow all safety protocols, which include the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), and awareness of potential hazards. A first-aid kit is required. Leaders of field experiences must provide a description of the activities and the potential safety hazards before departing for the field. All participants must attend these briefings, and instructions given by trip leaders must be followed. Accidents, injuries, or potential hazards must be reported immediately to the appropriate trip leader or designated person. Field equipment must be used in a way that ensures the safety of everyone. Individuals are responsible for maintaining their personal health and care, including the responsible use of alcohol and other substances. Weapons are not permitted without authorization from the Department Head. Behavior that endangers field participants or negatively impacts field activities will not be permitted and may result in dismissal at that individual's own expense.

2. Environmental Stewardship: Minimize environmental impact by preventing damage to natural habitats, ecosystems, and cultural sites. Obtain all required permits and permissions for field activities on public and private lands. Leave no trace of your presence by collecting and disposing of waste properly. Recycle whenever possible.

3. Civic Responsibility. Obey all laws. Comply with all regulations on public lands. Respect the rights of all private property owners. Be courteous, and remember that every interaction reflects on you, the Department of Geology, and the University of Georgia.

4. Cultural Sensitivity: Respect the cultures, beliefs, and customs of local communities. Obtain the informed consent for interactions or research involving local people. Seek permission before accessing culturally sensitive areas, and do not disrupt or interfere with local activities.

5. Communication and Collaboration: Maintain clear and open lines of communication with supervisors, colleagues, and local communities to build and sustain positive relationships amongst all. Share responsibilities and knowledge to foster a collaborative environment with fellow participants.

6. Preparedness: Be prepared by understanding the objectives, challenges, and safety protocols that are specific to the planned fieldwork. Bring all essential equipment and supplies needed and consider environmental conditions such as weather and terrain.

7. Data Management: Data must be recorded promptly, accurately, and comprehensively. Ensure that field notes are thorough and well-organized. Ensure that data are stored securely and backed up routinely to prevent loss.

By adhering to this Code of Conduct, all members of the Department of Geology contribute to an environment that fosters intellectual growth, mutual respect, and collaborative excellence. We strengthen the reputation of the Department of Geology and uphold ethical and professional standards in our field activities while ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants.