

Behavioral Norms for Field Trips and Field Courses

Department of Geological Sciences, University of Florida

We aspire to create a welcoming, equitable, and inclusive space, in which all participants are treated with mutual respect in an environment free from discrimination and harassment. These guidelines apply to ALL participants – students, staff and faculty. All students are required to adhere to the [UF Student Code of Conduct](#) – on or off campus.

Please see GeoSPACE House Rules at the end of this doc for CoC content specific to GeoSPACE.

Expected Behavior

Physical safety and Wellbeing:

- Take care of yourself. You are responsible for good self-care including, e.g., hydration, sunscreen, appropriate field clothing, adequate sleep and good hygiene.
- Look out for others' well-being and consider how your actions may impact the health and safety of others.

Emotional safety and Wellbeing:

- Respect: Treat all participants – faculty, staff and students, with respect at all times.
- Mental Health: Field courses can be challenging. You may experience imposter syndrome, homesickness, and feelings of isolation or anxiety about being in a new setting and interacting with new people. Sometimes just voicing your feelings to other students can help to ease these feelings. If you experience emotional distress, please inform a field leader, or reach out for [free mental health counseling](#) and 24/7 crisis support from UF.

Engagement & Communication

- Learning: Engage actively and constructively with learning activities.
- Speak up for yourself: If you feel you are not able to fully participate in all activities or you are struggling with physical or academic requirements, talk to a field leader. They can't help you if they don't know there's a problem.
- Speak up for others: Alert appropriate personnel if you witness unacceptable behavior, a dangerous situation, or someone in distress. Notify field leaders of an emergency immediately – don't try to handle it yourself.

Unacceptable Behavior

- Bullying or Abuse: Physical, psychological, or verbal abuse or bullying of anyone. This includes unwelcome physical contact or lewd remarks, including

inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images or discussion of sexual experiences.

- Harassment: Unwelcome conduct that makes another person feel uncomfortable, humiliated, or creates mental distress. Disparaging behavior or targeted abuse based on personal characteristics, backgrounds or identities. This includes the use of microaggressions, which are statements or actions regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, discrimination or disrespect against members of an identity group. Because some microaggressions can be unintentional, a violation would be considered to be repeated instances after the behavior is pointed out
- Impaired Behavior: Consumption of alcohol or other behavior-altering substances that puts you or others at risk. See UF policy [for a Drug-free workplace](#) for more information.

Ethical Field Work

Field courses will abide by ethical standards regarding impact on the land, strategic and responsible sampling, working within legal and cultural rules for field sites, and engaging with local communities in respectful ways. For more information about ethical fieldwork, see the [Field Ethics and Sampling Checklist](#) from the Geological Society of America.

Reporting Code of Conduct Violations

When conflicts or potential violations of the CoC emerge, the tiered grievance procedures can be used for early intervention, conflict resolution, mediation, or the services of an ombuds. Please note that reporting a situation that falls under Title IX (discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual violence) will obligate the instructor to report the incident to the UF Title IX Office.

Ways to Report

Tier 1 - Early intervention and interpersonal conflict resolution: Most conflicts and CoC violations fall into this category and can be resolved through discussion with the parties involved. To report an issue, reach out to a field leader or TA and explain the situation. They can determine the best way to address the issues with all relevant parties.

Tier 2 - External Mediation: If you do not feel comfortable with Tier 1 because of who might be involved, or if Tier 1 does not resolve the problem, you may contact the Department of Geological Sciences ombuds (Mark Brenner, brenner@ufl.edu), or the Department Chair (Dr. Ellen Martin, eemartin@ufl.edu), or any other faculty member you feel comfortable speaking with. These faculty members can act as third parties to mediate difficult conversations, facilitate resolution of issues, and provide additional resources as the situation requires. For a mediator outside of our department, please contact [UF Office of the Ombuds](#).

Tier 3 - Formal Reports or Grievances: If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, or the issue constitutes a serious violation of health or safety, you can file a report with

the appropriate University office. Please see the resources at <https://report.ufl.edu/> for more information.

Consequences of repeated or serious violations

Most issues can be addressed without punitive actions. However, some faculty may include adherence to the CoC into their grading rubric as part of a participation grade, such that repeated offenses may negatively impact your course grade. Serious violations that put others in danger, actions that cause repeated distress or humiliation to others, or ignoring rules and faculty instruction regarding safety may result in expulsion from the course and being sent home at your own expense. If you are sent home before the end of the course for CoC violations, you will not be able to complete the remaining assignments. Formal grievances filed by participants in the course may result in additional punitive actions.

Summary

Field learning is a fantastic opportunity and should be an enjoyable experience for all participants – students, faculty and staff. Abiding by an agreed-upon set of expectations helps ensure that everyone has the opportunity to teach and learn in a supportive and welcoming environment. We look forward to working with you in the field!



GeoSPACE House Rules

GeoSPACE is a unique field course with situations that don't often come up in other field courses. This section of the document is collaboratively developed with students each year to reflect what they feel is most important for interpersonal behaviors. We will create a final version, based on your feedback, that everyone can agree to at the start of the field course.

Roommates and Housing

We will be in shared housing. Most participants will have a roommate. Conflicts can sometimes arise between roommates and housemates when norms are not articulated.

People who are sharing a room should:

- Discuss and respect personal needs in terms of social battery and personal space (the need for quiet time, communication preferences, etc.) Be considerate of your roommate and expect the same consideration in return.
- Agree on a rough framework for morning and evening schedules including quiet time / lights out hours for the room.

- Keep messes to a manageable level. Agree with roommate on general guidelines for messes and clutter (planned clean-up times, zones, whatever works for you both).
- Talk about general preferences such as alarm clocks, noise, etc. to find a workable solution to potential conflicts.

People who are sharing a house should:

- Not touch other people's things without permission, especially medical equipment, which could be damaged with improper handling.
- Honor quiet hours. From 10:00 pm – 7:00 am, noise needs to be kept to a minimum.
- Assist with housekeeping including dinner cleanup and restroom tidying as needed. No one likes chores, but many hands make light work. Not everyone may be able to do every task, but there is usually something each person can do to help. If you literally can't do what you are assigned for disability reasons, suggest potential alternatives.
- Be considerate of others when using the bathroom facilities, especially in the mornings. If you know you will need extended time in the bathroom, please work out the timing of these longer periods of bathroom use with others who use that bathroom.
- Keep open food items out of the bedrooms. This is important for odors, sanitation, and food allergies.
- If a food item is labeled as set-aside for a specific person, don't eat it without asking permission. We will have plenty of food that is fair game for everyone, but dietary needs can be serious – don't put someone's health at risk by using their special food items!

Physical Safety

In addition to the guidelines outlined in the Code of Conduct, participants should:

- Be aware that firearms are not allowed at the field course.
- Only use smoking products outdoors and away from the house. No smoking is allowed in any indoor spaces used by the field course, including vehicles.
- Always work with a buddy or team in the field - don't wander off by yourself! The buddy system is a procedure in which two individuals operate together as a single unit so they can monitor and help each other. Some examples include:
 - o Navigating physically challenging spaces if assistance is needed.
 - o Friendly reminders about increasing water intake, sunscreen and other self-care.
 - o Being aware of the physical location of your partner and staying within eye or ear shot of each other.
- If you are leaving the group during downtime/breaks, you should always alert your buddy or a faculty member so we don't hit the panic button when we can't find you. This includes downtime at the house. If you leave the premises, just let someone know.

Ethical Fieldwork

We will be visiting a range of locations: private land, state-managed areas, National Parks and Tribal lands. Each has different rules for acceptable field behavior. We give reminder briefs

whenever we change locations to make sure everyone knows what is acceptable at that location. In general, these are the guidelines:

- **Respect the Indigenous contexts of field locations.** It may look like open desert, but almost all of the locations we will visit are current homelands and/or lands used by Indigenous peoples for resources and ceremony. Do what you can to minimize damage, and if you find artifacts or items of cultural significance, leave them alone. We will review relevant details regarding cultural respect before visiting each field site.
- **Be mindful of biological residents of field sites.** When working “off trail”, be mindful of plants and try to minimize your impact on them. Some desert plants are hearty survivors, but some are very fragile. Likewise, desert animals can be dangerous to you, but you are way more dangerous to them. Give them space!
- **Location-Specific Rules and Ethics:**
 - a. **In National Parks and National Monuments**, do not collect, remove or damage rocks, artifacts or anything else you find on the ground! It is against the law to remove rocks/artifacts from these sites without authorization.
 - b. **On private property**, you will need to follow the rules as laid out by the field instructors regarding collecting rocks or damaging them (i.e. use of rock hammers). Some locations it will be ok, in others it won't be ok.
 - c. **On state/forest land**, rules are very lax. However, please be a good geo-citizen and be thoughtful about what you take.
- **Practice a “pack it in, pack it out” system when facilities are not available.** If it came in with you, it needs to leave with you, including trash. Field instructors can help you with systems for dealing with personal care waste in the field.
- **Use sustainable field practices.** Careless collecting degrades field sites for future visitors. You don't need to take home every rock you pick up. Consider using other methods to document a location such as sketches, photos, videos, or 3D scans.