

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Pod Name: Grace Anne Stewart Speaker Series Pod from the University of Alberta

Podlet Leaders: Avni Patel, Libby Tunney, Tim McIntyre, Brielle Andersen, Lisa Budney, Scott Cocker, and Nicklas Baran

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This is what was found by Grace Anne Stewart Series pod at the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, University of Alberta on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and needed resources.

Session 1: Group Norms and Pod Agreements

1. Provide a departmental faith room to accommodate religious diversity.
 - **Moderate priority:** for the time being we can direct people to the multi-faith rooms already available on campus. We could make a multi-use quiet space that's more inclusive to all members of the community and can be booked if privacy is needed (ATLAS/GASSS/PSW).
2. Improve synergies between department administration, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Society (ATLAS), The Geography and Planning Students' Society (GAPPS), and Grace Anne Stewart Speaker Series (GASSS).
 - **High priority:** in the early stages (new GASSS representative on ATLAS beginning in the 2021-2022 academic year, ATLAS-GASSS-EDI Committee meeting) - all above mentioned groups contribute.
3. Bring a version of the URGE deliverables to Stephen, the Strategic Planning Committee, Associate Dean EDI, and EAS EDI Committee.
 - **High priority:** summary document with actionable steps to create a clear road map/progressive plan for our vision for the future (GASSS).
4. Create a diversity/anti-racist/EDI statement that outlines our department's values for use on hiring documents, to be put on the department website, and posted physically in EAS spaces.
 - **High priority:** EDI Committee

Session 2: Policy for Dealing with Complaints

1. Creation of a mentorship program (currently in the works).
 - Explicit process navigating complaints as well as other mental health and academic supports. Mental health and sensitivity training made available to students and faculty.
 - **High priority:** GASSS, Department Council

2. Create a department-level code of conduct where the EDI statement is explicit.
 - Added to the syllabus of all EAS courses, included in orientation packages for students/staff/faculty, and made publicly accessible on the department's website.
 - **High priority:** Department level - EDI committee, EAS Executive Committee, Department Council, with help from Tara McGee (Associate Dean EDI)
 - **Moderate priority:** Lab level - Each lab group
3. Annual training opportunities for faculty are highly recommended.
 - **Moderate priority:** EAS Executive Committee, EAS Chair
 - Perhaps ask EHS to include EDI training into the supervisor training that is strongly recommended which would be universal across the campus - EDI Committee take up the chain.
4. Class evaluations (USRIs) and departmental surveys should have an EDI component made available to the department and EDI designated groups.
 - **Moderate priority:** would require university level change. Include general questions like if the supervisor considered EDI, did they create an inclusive learning environment etc. EDI Committee to follow up with USRI.
5. Third party check-in midway through graduate program where students get the opportunity to talk about any issues that they have encountered up to that point.
 - **High priority:** Grad chair - earlier than candidacy, more transparency on how to approach a complaint in a timely way.
6. Outline the funding sources that are available to students that are having issues with their supervisor.
 - Set aside funding if you have to switch supervisors.
 - **High priority:** EAS Chair
7. Reporting complaint policy and code of conduct should be regularly reviewed (last review was 2017). Recommend every 2-3 years.
 - **Moderate priority:** Department level - Mentorship program could contribute
 - **Moderate priority:** Lab level, handled lab by lab - Supervisor/students
 - **Low priority:** University level

Session 3: Statistical Analyses of Program and its History

1. Develop a professional survey to track the student experience because at this time it would not be beneficial to include demographic data (socioeconomic, ethnicity). This could include:
 - Partnering with social science or geography department staff and students to develop and track the student experience in the EAS department at the UofA.

- Introduce a yearly, anonymous 'exit' interview (survey) might serve as a qualitative way of gauging year to year successes.
 - Questions could be directed towards the culture of the department (i.e. "how would you describe the department culture") and feelings of inclusivity in the department (i.e. "do you feel that you are part of the community?"; "Have you experienced isolation/discomfort as part of the EAS community?").
 - Use social media catch-all platforms for alumni to track the graduated student population experience in EAS and minority population that remain in geoscience post-graduation.
 - **High priority:** University level demographic survey data coming
 - **High priority:** EAS Inclusion Survey- EAS EDI committee
 - **Moderate priority:** EAS Program Exit Survey- EAS department level, no staff right now
 - **Moderate priority:** EAS Alumni Survey- would need email addresses and consent to contact - EAS department level, no staff right now
 - Could a portion of TAships be put forward to getting an external student/staff from social sciences to work on this?
2. Develop better harassment and discrimination policies that require immediate actionable steps be taken when such complaints are made. It is additionally important that people feel like actionable steps will be taken seriously addressing any complaints (e.g. mandatory training for new students and staff outline the complaints policies and how complaints are dealt with).
 - Training is in the works for educating the department on discrimination and harassment policies.
 - **High priority:** The department should make an explicit statement about anti-harassment policies to show that we are enacting university-wide policies. Cross-collaboration between all sub-committees in the department.
 3. Develop an internship program with industry partners designed to give minority peoples industry experience.
 - Faculty of Science Internship Program, AB Gov. 2030
 - **Moderate priority (long term):** Enlist help from the U of A careers service, pull from programs that they have already.
 4. The geosciences culture often includes alcohol, which can be a religious or cultural barrier. Introduce more networking events without including alcohol to increase overall inclusivity.
 - **High priority:** ATLAS, PSW, EAS Wellness Committee
 5. Maintain a platform to inform the community of EDI issues, bring people together, and foster community.

- May have unintended consequences - Student groups, should be primarily informative/advertising.
 - **Low priority:** student groups (already exists for GASSS) and could advertise on the screens in EAS by contacting Igor/Nadine.
6. Create a platform for students and staff to share their experiences about mental health in academia.
- **Low priority:** Wellness Committee

Session 4: Policies for Working with Communities of Color

1. ATLAS High School Outreach Program to address low admissions (in general and communities of color) – **in the works**
 - **High priority:** Dani, ATLAS, Collections Admin.
 - Develop talks to give to high school students within the city and northern communities to advertise EAS as a viable career path.
 - i. Could work with Alberta Education to develop an online earth science high school course – possibly a good way to tie in the ATLAS high school outreach program.
 - School outreach opportunities would build relationships with communities of color and make future collaborations easier between groups.
 - A volunteer option to graduate students to go to local high schools to give a talk.
 - Outlining different careers in Earth science and take part in career fairs.
 - Host in-person or virtual town halls to give people the opportunity to ask questions about earth science.
 - Virtual visits to classrooms (EAS museums are doing this during covid).
 - Earth science PD workshops at teacher conventions.
 - Host symposium for parents and their children to learn about earth science and career paths (need parental buy-in).
 - Bringing high school science teachers on EAS 110 as professional development (what do geoscientists do?).
 - Students/PIs make very small (11x17) posters with main points of a project for putting up at the post office or band office of remote communities.
 - Could advertise entrance funding opportunities and other resources to these communities.
 - Invite teachers onto existing EAS field trips.
 - EAS 100 Indigenous course- followup with Britta Jensen
 - Paleo 20, are there others? Work with Alberta Education - add geo/enviro?
2. Department should take control of their entrance requirements and admissions.

- Need to give potential students a way to access U of A EAS otherwise we are just building diversity for another university.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** Change of GPA requirements is in the works but the timeline is unknown. Faculty level change required first.
 - ii. **High priority:** Change the recommendations to FGSR on who is admitted for grad school (we could ask students to write an optional EDI statement on application on their own diverse experiences). Easy to implement if the Grad Chair/Chair are on board. Could eventually get to a quantitative system.
- 3. Creation of outreach programs directed towards communities of color.
 - Contact WISEST to see if we can branch out and incorporate communities of color (primarily Indigenous groups), or even low-income communities in Edmonton and surrounding areas
 - i. **High priority:** Kurt Konhauser
 - Other programs mentioned included U-School, Discovery, and the Faculty of Science summer camps - could reach out to these groups and determine if it would be possible to collaborate or see how their program runs to help build our own initiative.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** Work with Faculty of Science Recruitment and Faculty of Science Engagement- ongoing initiative by initiative
- 4. Create a department spreadsheet to collect resources and points of contact from relationships created from past field work (**in the works**). Berto has started this
 - i. **High priority:** Alberto Reyes is working on this.
 - Bring to the Field Research Office to see if they would implement a system like this on a larger university scale.
 - i. **Lower priority:** requires external change
- 5. Addressing that extra costs (such as equipment) related to the degree program may be a barrier to some to enrol in geosciences.
 - i. Gear swap where the whole department is invited.
 - ii. **High Priority:** Student groups (ATLAS/PS Warren/GASSS)

Session 5: Admissions and Hiring Policies

1. Change EDI hiring procedures to improve EDI hiring outcomes
 - Move the EDI statement to the top of the document to convey that it is a strong value of the department and add a link to the EDI department of the University or the EDI section of the department.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** any of the departmental groups can do this - make the recommendation that the university does this.
 - Set up a “tracking” system to verify that committees are indeed promoting this diversity during the admissions/hiring process (some universities ask

3. Recommendations for student admissions and faculty hiring:
 - Increase the visibility of undergraduate independent projects. That would allow a student to show their potential to a specific professor and build that relationship with labs.
 - i. Undergraduate research initiative - increase visibility instead of trying to build our own
 - ii. **Moderate priority:** Make it known that you can do independent projects (advertising on the same page as grad projects).
 - iii. PS.Warren: Advertise the USRA in the department, how to apply, etc. Maybe talk to the career center about making a workshop about how to apply to them.
 - iv. Internship students give presentations after their work terms
 - Consider alternative ways to generate letters of reference for undergraduate students.
 - i. Recommendation letters based on interviews or letters written by TAs (find out if TA recommendation letters are accepted).
 - ii. Encourage undergraduates to write letters immediately after a course (e.g. field school)
 - iii. **High priority:** educate students on how to approach obtaining these letters and hold faculty accountable (think about accessibility of these letters and how they are written) - ATLAS Talks.
 - Selectively subsidise the admission fee (i.e., based on country of origin, socioeconomic background etc.).
 - i. **Lower priority:** EAS can't do this at the department level.
 - ii. Follow up with FGSR (Avni or other ATLAS member)
 - Build a platform online where potential applicants can find a way to get their transcripts/paperwork translated at low cost and/or create a fund available to pay for application cost for minority applicants.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** Fund would require a few years to develop. Have links to services that could help with translation on the department website - Contact Igor
 - GPA shouldn't be adjusted based on the prestige of the institution. Make sure that "GPA can be waived under the request of the supervisor" is clearly stated.
 - i. **Low Priority:** Out of our control.
 - ii. Ask FGSR about this (impacts diversity) and to make this process transparent.
 - Make the graduate student page more user friendly to make sure that international, first generation students have an easy time applying.
 - i. **High priority:** in internal resources - ATLAS, EAS grad chair, Igor

- Value work and volunteer experience as additional and candidate-specific criteria for admission/hire. It assesses the motivation and the maturity of the candidate.
 - i. **High priority:** could be part of the personal statement.
 - Include a link to the scholarships that might be available to candidates to encourage candidates from minority backgrounds.
 - i. **Lower priority:** awards processes are changing, IT could add/improve filter tools.
 - ii. **High priority:** EAS Executive member responsible for scholarships and rewards would help, ATLAS awards position might assist in writing applications, identifying candidates.
4. Recommendations for evaluating applicants/applications:
- Recommended EDI training for all faculty. First step can be to take the “Unconscious bias training module” available online on the Government of Canada website.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** Mandatory not going to work but can advertise training to the department. Organized by GASSS.
 - Add a flowchart on how the decision is made with all factors considered disclosed — Grad chair could lead the development of guidelines for admission
 - i. Evaluate the quality/context of publications of a scholarship or faculty candidate rather than just the quantity (actually reading the publication should be part of the process).
 - ii. During the application process online, make specific areas for each information. For the first screening of applicants, only disclose part of the filled information to the professor (i.e., no name, no name of the institution, etc.)
 - iii. Meaningless if sharing/prioritizing publications
 - Remove the minimum GPA criteria for TAs.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** tough for Associate Chair grad to do on their own. EDI Committee to put pressure on FGSR
5. Recommendations for selection committees:
- **High priority:** EAS admin
 - Have a faculty level EDI officer come to sit on some of the admissions process to check whether the committee is meeting the EDI consideration requirements.
 - Limit the amount of committees each faculty can sit in on to avoid overload of some faculty and balance every faculty implication.
6. Recommendations for hiring/admissions processes being evaluated by outside consultants:

- **High priority:** EAS admin
 - Release this information to the department to increase transparency.
 - Create an explicit EDI section that is released to the public that current and prospective students and staff can access when making their decision.
 - Increase the frequency of these reviews, potentially to every five years.
7. Recommendations for partner hires:
- **High priority:** EAS admin
 - EDI should come before spousal hires. While spousal hires can be important, communities that have been underrepresented for reasons out of their control should be considered. Especially if this is for faculty positions. Filling two positions can limit opportunities for others.
8. Recommendations for socioeconomic status considerations:
- **High priority:** EAS admin
 - Allow more scholarships to applicants from minorities.
 - Make sure that these scholarships are given to who they were intended to (There is a record of scholarships supposed to be given to BIPOC/Indigenous/women that were allocated to white males in the past). The selection process should be available to the public.
 - The funds available for minority students should not be limited in time (if no student fits the profile, the funding is kept for the next year).

Session 6: Lab and Field Code of Conduct

1. Ensure that all faculty, staff, and students have the appropriate training to conduct research safely and considerately.
 - **High priority:** provided faculty buy-in, long term process
 - Look to other departments/services within the university to build/provide specific courses
 - Put steps in grad student handbook
 - Reach out to the Field research office - only about physical safety but should really incorporate mental safety
2. Develop field courses and fieldwork being conscious of areas that may be unsafe for ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+, women, and those with physical disabilities.
 - **High priority:** financial needs - a lot of efforts from the Instructor (FAP)
 - Include a minority risk assessment.
 - For course-based fieldwork consider pre-assigning groups using a random selection system to better integrate minority students. High Priority, but you have to consider intra-group conflict.
 - Create workspace/lab hazard assessments for all groups in the department

- i. <https://www.ualberta.ca/human-resources-health-safety-environment/environment-and-safety/self-help/hazard-assessment-web-application.html>
 - ii. Dan Alessi is head of the safety committee
 - iii. Already mandatory and have to keep updated.
3. Develop field courses focused on shared responsibility, both in terms of science project management and student social wellbeing. Responsibilities can be distributed amongst the group – taking level of comfort into account.
 - **High priority:** for faculty and students (for inclusivity). Define tasks according to everybody's level of comfort.
4. Develop a fieldwork preparation workshop that includes how to put up tents, how to use equipment, information on field appropriate clothing, checklist on recommended personal items to bring, etc. ATLAS?
 - **Moderate priority:** Field preparation should be included as part of the course and include a detailed checklist and rundown of what the individual needs to bring, how to use tools and equipment that is being brought into the field, as well as health and safety protocols. Department level.
 - ATLAS and PSW can coordinate a field preparation workshop but ultimately this should be the responsibility of the department.
5. Accessibility considerations that can be implemented.
 - Provide an assessment of the terrain and accessibility.
 - i. **Moderate priority:** Be prepared to consider alternative options
 - Build flexible programming to accommodate a range of needs including alternatives for those unable to conduct the field work (replacement laboratory project, virtual field work, local field work, etc.).
 - i. APEGA doesn't waive this - *put pressure on APEGA.*
 - Consider financial barriers regarding equipment. Resale of fieldwork clothing and equipment within the department or donations that can be loaned or given to a student.
 - i. **High priority:** student associations (ATLAS/PS Warren/GASSS)
6. Create a field work code of conduct and inform field workers of a reporting process to follow when in the field. This could include identifying others, aside from the PI, to report to if you feel more comfortable (another faculty member, a TA, etc.).
 - **High priority**
 - Push the Field Research Office to create a campus-wide policy/code of conduct
 - i. Add EDI discussion to February field work meetings/presentations
 - ii. More to a safety plan than physical safety

- iii. Departmental reps (Alberto and Martin) can push FRO to take on some of this responsibility
- 7. Hold more discussions centered around EDI education and how it relates to fieldwork. University (safety officer) has to support this process and to educate the PI
 - **High priority: GASSS**
 - Include a paper relating to at-risk groups during fieldwork which can be included in the information package.
- 8. Add information to the daily check-ins before field work begins for the day. Top priority
 - **High priority: Faculty**
 - Report discrimination or inappropriate behaviour in the daily field safety log book. Add this to the book
 - Daily check-in on social and emotional wellbeing with all required to participate.
 - Coordinate with Biology URGE group to get Field Research Office to implement new policies
- 9. Hold a review process after the field work is completed.
 - **High priority: EDI committee/Dean**
 - Behaviour during fieldwork is peer-reviewed. For students it could be included as part of the grade as being a “good teammate”. For researchers, their feedback should be discussed in a meeting with the PI.
 - Have a post-fieldwork survey for researchers and students on their personal experiences. Include questions about situations where group members felt uncomfortable or unsafe.
 - i. Department-wide annual survey - protect small fieldwork groups
 - ii. Field trip exit survey sent to everyone on field safety report
 - iii. Use incident reporting resources, University Environmental Health and Safety, etc...
 - 1. Mental health and physical wellbeing are very separate at UofA, and this is a problem, need a more central hub for reporting?

Session 7: Asset Map of Resources to Support People of Color

- 1. Change orientation style to be more inclusive: de-emphasize alcohol, have orientation in a park with ice-breaker activities, games, sports, etc. for a more family-friendly and inclusive environment.
 - **High priority: student groups (ATLAS/PS Warren/GASSS)**
 - Less drinking. i.e. hikes, walks, bike rides, picnics, “Geek Olympics” - silly lab games, trivia, etc.

- ATLAS welcome event - is being discussed for Sept. 2021 if feasible.
- 2. Include orientation info to 2020 students for orientation in Sept 2021 (if they are happening again) as these students missed a lot of information due to covid.
 - **High priority: Student groups/admin collaboration**
 - Currently no orientation for undergraduates and postdocs.
- 3. Conduct “lunch events” ex.BIPOC walk/LGBTQ+ coffee etc (mix of undergrad and grad students) to target underrepresented groups in the department who may not have access to direct mentorships with BIPOC etc.
 - **High priority** post covid event (coffee for instance via email) (GASSS) difficult to find the person to appoint to run the safe space
- 4. Make key information available in module format on eclass, where all graduate students are added automatically.
 - **High priority:** resources specifically for students are hard to find (intranet? Eclass?)
 - Update graduate student handbook with graduate student input. Directs students to available university services (e.g., health, mental health, wellness). This could tie in with the eclass module.
 - We have an Interweb
 - i. Tom Chacko is current administrator
 - ii. ATLAS could format a graduate student part of the site
 - iii. PSW could format an undergraduate site
- 5. Mentorship program (outside of individual lab groups) for both undergraduate and graduate students has been proposed and is in the early stages of development.
 - **High priority: lead by GASSS**
 - Mentors can direct students to services available (e.g., mental health, wellness) through the university and community and follow up with the students about the helpfulness of these services. If services were not deemed helpful, mentors can suggest additional services to try, keeping a record of what services worked and what didn't for future reference.
 - For the new mentorship programs, train mentors in what resources are available so they can pass these along to mentees.
 - URGE members could coordinate/evaluate EDI policy in development
- 6. Could have posters with people's picture and title and what they can help you with around the halls and add this information to the e-class page.
 - Department staffing is likely going to become less consistent in the future
 - Use screens around the department to communicate resources
- 7. Email circulations about what resources are available to students. No more emails! Booklet for student and EAS intranet resources
- 8. Field equipment:

- **Moderate priority:** student groups (ATLAS/PS Warren/GASSS)
 - Advertise departmental discount at Camper's Village (it's something like 10-15%) Departmental gear swap event.
 - i. Potentially right before field school and could make it into a social event.
 - ii. Could try and get some of the local outdoor stores to be involved and see if they are willing to offer left-over stock at a discounted price.
 - iii. Add this information to the EAS intranet website or eclass (if made)
9. Have a meet-up on zoom for grad students specifically. Fun and connective. To give more comfort.
- **Low priority:** student association (ATLAS)
 - Already doing this have a discord run by ATLAS
10. Have a way to connect people geographically who can support each other. Provide areas or neighbourhoods.
- **Moderate priority:** started by Avni
11. Department needs to do better to support incoming students who move to Edmonton. i.e. forum to resell furniture, finding safe housing (people to help find places, suggestions, alerting when you move out). A grad student handbook is in the early stages of development.
- **High priority:** already been started (Avni)
 - How can we make sure the services are given instead of asked for? Person in charge of dealing with incoming students and making sure they are connected? - connect incoming students with a graduate who "knows the ropes" of the department, UofA, and Edmonton.
12. Encourage supervisors to create community and support. Communities within lab groups and within the department as a whole.
13. Email reminder to register for thesis as this is confusing for many graduate students.
- **High priority:** ATLAS
 - Put in the handbook and make the handbook easily searchable.
14. Have a meeting each semester with all department committees, with a representative from each committee to discuss overlap between these groups to work more efficiently. Or have a shared google doc between these groups with the initiative, who is in charge, contact info, and stage.
- **High priority:** student groups (ATLAS/PS Warren/GASSS)
 - Can we find a way to clearly (re)allocate resources/directions/responsibilities for various departmental committees?
15. Better communication between department committees and students, so that students are aware of programs in development.

- **High priority**
- 16. Should have yearly meetings with PI/supervisor for an update on current work (i.e. how things are going, meeting expectations, ways to improve, etc.).
 - Already a requirement (FGSR is implementing a more standardized approach through the supervisory oversight initiative process).
- 17. Encouraging undergraduates to reach out to researchers for research opportunities (potentially provide them with a hand book for how to email, what should be in the email, who can be contacted).
 - **High priority:** opportunities on the EAS website (Melissa/Igor)
 - Use screens around the department to advertise research opportunities
- 18. Create a spreadsheet with all action steps so people can track the progress and volunteer to help with a given project.
 - **High priority:** GASSS