

ESPM field safety committee
Autumn 2024 - revised departmental recommendations
REVISED after feedback from faculty November 2024

Proposed actions

Sharing best practices from our peer community that can be voluntarily used:

- A checklist of best practices for teaching classes that have a field component should be shared.
 - The Field Safety Committee would develop this checklist.
 - This checklist would be posted on the ESPM safety webpage and would be an optional resource for instructors to consider using. It would be shared in ESPM 201A (the first year graduate class) and ESPM 375 (the GSI training class). The checklist could potentially be shared in other ESPM methods courses if instructors decide to use it.
- Graduate student prospectuses and annual review forms should be modified to include a question, “Is there fieldwork planned? If yes, has a field safety plan been developed?”
 - This question would initiate a conversation for students and advisors, but there would be no further requirements around compliance beyond those in place at campus level at this time.
 - The best practice would be for an annual check-in between the supervisor and the student on this question and review of any field safety issues.
- The ‘know your rights’ document prepared by the Field Safety Committee should be shared with incoming graduate students in ESPM 201A and undergraduate students / research assistants, and should be posted in Mulford Hall.
- The Field Safety Committee should gather examples of language and budget requests from NSF Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork (SAIF) Plans and other field safety line items in grant applications. These samples will then be made available on our website for reference.
- The field safety plan template should clarify that it is intended to cover all lab members performing field research, including field technicians / staff, non-UC scholars and visiting students, postdocs, Berkeley graduate students, and Berkeley undergraduate researchers.
- The field safety plan template(s) and teaching best practices documents should be amended to include clarification of best practices for field sites and personnel outside of working hours.

Supporting training activities available to the whole community:

- The department chair should request \$2000/year for the next 3 years from the College to paying for expert-provided, in-person safety trainings open to all CNR members.
 - The content of the trainings would be decided by the Field Safety Committees of CNR departments in conversation with other campus stakeholders on a yearly basis.

- Example topics could include: subsidized wilderness first aid, bystander intervention training, sexual violence prevention, conflict resolution, etc.
- Graduate classes (201A and 375) should include at least one session each on field safety.
 - The Field Safety Committee would volunteer to provide content to instructors, if desired.
 - Two graduate student specific field safety workshops have been created by the Field Safety Committee already.
- Incoming faculty should receive an onboarding training that covers available safety resources and expectations.
 - This would be provided by the department manager following a document developed by the Field Safety Committee.

Building departmental infrastructure and resources:

- The department should obtain a supply of satellite communication devices for shared use.
 - The Field Safety Committee has applied for a 'Be Smart About Safety' grant from EH&S to fund equipment plus operations costs for the first three years of service.
- Other needed shared field safety infrastructure or supplies may be identified by the Field Safety Committee.
- The field safety committee should work with the CNR development office to include a field safety giving opportunity for the Big Give 2025.

Tracking field activities in research and teaching:

- The department chair could address contributions to field safety, if applicable, in their promotion letters.
 - Candidates could provide relevant information in their statements about this topic, if desired, similar to the way mentoring can now be described by candidates.
 - Field safety would not be considered an independent merit category alongside research, teaching and mentoring, and service, but may be addressed as part of the record of teaching and mentoring--either teaching of courses with field components or mentoring students in field settings.
- The instruction chair should keep an annually updated list of which classes include a field component (defined as any off-campus in-person activity).
- Instructors of field classes should submit a field safety plan to the department manager.
 - Plans would be submitted once when an instructor takes on a class, or voluntarily when substantive changes to field components have been made.
 - The content of these plans would not be pre-set, but could follow the template plans and checklists provided by the department.
 - Verifying the existence of plans would enable the department and campus to make contact with team leads in the case of emergency, and help promote compliance with existing campus/Cal OSHA policies.

- The department manager should, on an annual basis, obtain a list of faculty conducting field research from EH&S and request a field safety plan from each.
 - The content of these plans would not be prescribed, but could follow the template plans and checklists provided by the department.
 - Central collation of plans would enable the department manager and campus to make contact with team leads in the case of emergency, and reduce our liability in the case of an accident.
 - The department chair should request \$1000/year for the next 3 years from the College for work/study funds to assist with the management and secure storage of documents.

Advocating for additional resources at the campus level:

- The department chair should meet with campus leaders to advocate for the hiring of a qualified Travel Security Manager, to be shared across campus or among multiple departments with similar field-based instruction and research.
 - The position's responsibilities would include:
 - Providing expert advice and free consulting on field safety plans;
 - Arranging campus safety trainings;
 - Serving as a point of contact and decision-maker for any emergency situations occurring in research or teaching (e.g., evacuations)