

Ice & Ocean Group
at the University of Virginia
Guidelines and Code of Conduct

Written by Dr. Lauren Simkins, modified on 23 July 2020

The Ice & Ocean Group at the University of Virginia includes undergraduate, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who are conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Lauren Simkins. The group is open and inclusive, and functions as a space to respectfully support and encourage members both professionally and personally. These guidelines are *not* a legal document and do not replace Department of Environmental Sciences, College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and university-level policies and directives.

Inclusivity and Conduct

An inclusive environment is supportive of people regardless of their gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, age, religion, and socioeconomic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. Such an environment is necessary for producing high-quality research, maintaining personal well-being, and developing collaborations. We do not tolerate harassment or discrimination by and/or of members of our group in any form, and I ask all members to conform to the following Code of Conduct:

- All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience, and be considerate of people from diverse backgrounds.
- Be kind to others, and contribute to discussions using a constructive, positive approach.
- Behave professionally. Harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary actions and communication are not appropriate, and participants who are asked to stop these behavior of any kind are expected to comply immediately, and disruptive and threatening incidents will be reported to the university's Office of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights.. Violence of any kind is not permitted, and will result in immediate formal reporting with the university and necessary officials.
 - Harassment includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion; sexual images in public spaces; deliberate intimidation; bullying; stalking, following; harassing photography or recording; sustained disruption of discussions; inappropriate physical contact; and unwelcome sexual attention.
- Be mindful of talking over others and be willing to hear the ideas of others. Talking over others is disruptive and leads to unproductive interactions. To facilitate discussion and ensure that everyone is heard:
 - Wait for others to pause or finish their train of thought before you begin speaking.
 - Pause long enough between thoughts or explicitly invite others to respond when speaking so that others feel welcome to contribute.

Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation are defined in the University's Preventing and Addressing Discrimination and Harassment policy ("PADH Policy") and the Preventing and Addressing Retaliation policy ("PAR Policy"). The PAR Policy not only prohibits retaliation against individuals who complain of discrimination and harassment under the PADH Policy, but also those who assist or participate in a resolution of such a complaint, e.g., an investigative witness.

Students and employees who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under the PADH and/or PAR Policy are encouraged to contact the EOCR office. You may report discrimination, harassment, and retaliation to the University through Just Report It, the University's online [reporting website](#) or by contacting EOCR at (434) 924-3200 or UVAEOCR@virginia.edu to speak with a member of the EOCR team.

Sexual Assault, Sexual Exploitation, Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, Sexual or Gender-Based Harassment, Complicity, and Retaliation are prohibited by the University's Policy on Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence ("Title IX Policy"). The Title IX Policy has separate procedures for resolving prohibited conduct. Those who believe that they, or someone else, have been subjected to the above forms of conduct are encouraged to contact the Title IX office at (434)-297-7988 or titleixcoordinator@virginia.edu. You may also report prohibited conduct through Just Report It or by contacting the Title IX office to speak with a member of the Title IX team. The Title IX Policy and Procedures are also available on the [EOCR website](#).

As a "Responsible Employee", I am required to report any cases of sexual and gender-based harassment and other forms of interpersonal violence to EOCR, and I will report any incidences of discrimination and other forms of harassment. "Confidential Employees" are licensed medical, clinical, or mental-health professionals who, when acting in that capacity, will not disclose information to the University's Title IX Coordinator without the student's permission. Examples of Confidential Resources are Counseling and Psychological Services ("CAPS") [(434)243-5150 or (434) 972-7004 for after hours and weekends], the Maxine Platzer Lynn Women's Center's Confidential Advocate [(434)982-2252], and the UVA Medical Center [(434) 924-0000]. Additional information about confidential resources can be found [here](#).

Mental Health

Graduate school and, generally, scholarly life can be challenging for your mental health due to:

- Low pay and quality-of-life issues,
- Lack of community, and feeling distanced from family and friends,
- Feelings of isolation and uncertainty in your research,
- Uncertainty in your post-higher education career,
- Dealing with 'negative results' in your research, that are often more challenging to solve and leave you with little to show relative to time spent,
- Burnout by feeling the need to work endless, and the subsequent exhaustion.

Everyone should take an active approach to the maintenance of their mental health. I want to ensure that you have the time and resources you need to be successful and happy, but often I will not know if you are struggling with mental health or have difficulty coping with any of the above listed issues. I encourage you to talk to me if there is anything placing undue stress or preventing you from performing at your potential and causing you to be unhappy during your time here. You can also contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) on grounds: (studenthealth.virginia.edu/caps). The above issues and waning mental health are common in academic and research settings, but that does not mean it is acceptable to, nor should you, suffer and/or doubt yourself through the process.

Individual Contributions

Although we collectively make up the Ice & Ocean Group and share research progress with each other, your project is your own and you should feel ownership of it. In science communication, we often refer to 'we' which encompasses all individuals directly involved in the development of the project and

those who have made major contributions to the work. You should, however, acknowledge that you are lead on the project. It is professionally courteous to acknowledge others involved in the project (e.g., your adviser :) and, if applicable, co-adviser and other collaborators), and it is professionally required to acknowledge funding sources (e.g., NSF, department fellowship). Except for in rare circumstances (i.e., you leave the program with uncompleted research and are not actively involved in seeing the project through), you will be listed as first author on all presentations and publications primarily based on your project.

Outputs and Open Science

Members of the group should be open about their science and encourage feedback from others. Peer evaluation of products like conference abstracts, manuscripts, and proposals is highly encouraged and, if possible, before sending to Dr. Simkins. Authorship on any manuscript or presentation will be openly discussed in group meetings and should, if possible, include everyone who has made a significant contribution to the work. A 'significant contribution' can include but is not limited to interpretations of primary data and development of significant ideas presented in the work. It is not expected that all members of the Ice & Ocean Group are included as co-authors on your works; however, it is possible that other researchers in the group will make significant contributions with your knowledge and support, and they should be included as co-authors. This is common for collaborative research communities who support open science.

Author order on manuscripts or presentations should be determined by the relative contributions made by each author rather than, for example, seniority or position. Another way to establish author order could be the timing (first to last) of when collaborators began involvement in the project. Determining author order can be extremely tricky and there are no 'one-size-fits-all' guidelines; therefore, I can help you through this process. To help inform Editors, reviewers, and readers of our papers, we will include an author contribution statement for each paper.

Research products (e.g., data, maps, code, documents) should be backed up often - I suggest daily - on an off-site, cloud-based storage system, such as OneDrive offered to UVA students, staff, and faculty. Research products used and described in published manuscripts should be made publicly available to the scientific community either as main-text figures/tables, supplemental files associated with manuscripts, and/or shared via an appropriate online data repository. You should discuss with me if you think there is good reason to keep research products exclusive.

Undergraduate students in the group should make significant contributions to a research project, and, if you work in the group for more than 3 semesters, you are expected to either author a peer-reviewed journal article as lead (which means the student writes the submitted paper him/herself) or co-author a paper with others in the group. Authorship for undergraduate students is contingent on the amount/quality/nature of the work, and might fall outside of the timeframe of active undergraduate research involvement.

Graduate students and postdocs are required to publish manuscripts in a timely manner. The scope of each graduate student and postdoc project has been carefully selected so that the project stands alone (i.e., progress/output is not contingent on someone else's project). Having peer-reviewed journal articles demonstrates that you can see a project through, that you can communicate the project, and that you are capable of pushing the boundaries of science with new results, innovative methods, and thought-provoking ideas/questions. **MS students** will publish a minimum of one peer-reviewed journal article, which should form the basis of the MS thesis and must be written in a form that is 'submittable' by the time of thesis defense. **PhD students** will publish three peer-reviewed journal articles, which will form the main chapters of the dissertation. One manuscript must be published by the time of dissertation defense, another must be submitted by your defense date, and another must be

in a suitable state for submission shortly after (maximum of 1-3 months post-defense). It is in your best interest to publish prior to graduating because this makes you more competitive in whatever career path you choose to pursue. It is extremely hard to finish projects and writing once you graduate, begin a job, and physically/mentally/temporally distance yourself from the project. **Postdocs** are expected to publish at least one peer-reviewed journal article as first author each year and at least one co-authored paper with collaborators each year.

Your peer-reviewed journal articles should be submitted to journals such as The Cryosphere, Geology, Nature family, Science family, Journal of Geophysical Research family, Journal of Glaciology, Sedimentology, Earth Surface Processes and Landforms, Marine Geology, etc. The choice of journal will depend on the type of study, length of manuscript, and fit within the journal scope, and with consideration of the target audience.

Conferences

Long-term undergraduates are expected to present their project at one regional or national meeting prior to graduation. Graduate students are expected to present their work at one regional, national, or international meeting per year. Postdocs are expected to present at two conferences per year. You are expected to apply for all appropriate travel funding regardless of whether I have travel funds available to you.

Working Hours

I recognize that many of you have personal responsibilities and obligations in addition to your research and coursework. For graduate students and postdocs, I appreciate that, at times, it can be difficult to balance those demands, and that a classic 9-to-5 day may not be optimal. Because of this, the exact hours you choose to work is up to you. Being on campus between 11 AM and 4 PM EST most days will, however, help facilitate collaborative working and lead to a more fulfilling research experience. Undergraduate students should choose working hours between these times as well, and plan work in the lab or along-side other group members on a regular basis. When possible, meetings and events will not be arranged outside these hours to allow participation by all group members. Work at night and on weekends is sometimes necessary especially before deadlines, but will likely lead to a drag on your overall productivity if it is a regular occurrence. If you feel that you are having difficulty maintaining a healthy work-life balance, please let me know.

Holidays

As a graduate student or postdoc in the Ice & Ocean Group, you are expected to take at least two weeks of time off per year beyond normal university holidays (e.g. federal holidays, fall/spring/winter breaks). You should take this time to relax, visit family and friends, and generally unwind. Please inform me in advance when you plan to take holidays, if you will not be present at weekly meetings, or are taking planned time away from research.

Meetings

Graduate students and postdocs will have individual meetings with me each week at a scheduled and regular time. I will block an hour so that there is sufficient time, although we likely won't need a whole hour each week. Between my schedule and yours, it will be difficult to reschedule, so we need to stick to our scheduled time to the best of our ability. **Undergraduate students** will be paired with graduate students who are working on similar/complementary projects for their weekly meetings.

These meetings are to be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. We will have a **weekly group meeting** at a scheduled and regular time. Everyone involved in research in the Ice & Ocean group should attend. Outside of the individual and group meetings, I am happy for anyone to come by my office anytime with questions/concerns/ideas.

Social Activities

Occasionally we will plan activities outside of working hours and off-grounds. All members of the group will be invited and encouraged to attend. Most social events will be open to family and significant others.

Individual Development Plans

Individual development plans will be made for each member of the Ice & Ocean Group. For graduate students and postdocs, a general plan will be made covering specific obligations (e.g., teaching), research objectives, and professional skills you would like to obtain during your time at UVA. **These plans will be targeted at 2 years for Masters students and 4 (max 5) years for PhD students.** These will be tailored to help you best prepare for your desired career path, while providing you a breadth of 'marketable' skills that can be used in many professions. Prior to each fall semester, we will develop more specific annual plans that will include courses you plan to take, goals for annual research progress, conference involvement, field work, targets for research/travel funding, etc. Graduate students and postdocs should have a plan or ideas for science communication and outreach that will be implemented during your time at UVA.

Communication

Communication should primarily be via email, slack, or in person. You are not expected to answer email after normal working hours and should not expect others to do so. Communication regarding urgent matters should be relayed via email *and* texting or calling me at any time, especially if you are in the field, travelling, or in a dangerous situation.

Other guidelines/points

- You should be proactive about your research and in the pursuit of research and travel funding.
- Let me know if you are lacking resources/experiences that you need to successfully conduct your research and prepare for your future career.
- Graduate students and postdocs need to create and maintain a professional website, develop application materials (e.g., CV, research/teaching statement), and apply to at least two jobs prior to defending.
- By the time you defend, you should understand what the professional market is like and use your time within the group to train for your future career, not just to get the degree.
- Remember that I am an advocate for your success, well-being, and safety while you are here at UVA and beyond. There are behind the scene ways that I support you, and I am fully invested in your success. Please let me know if you need help beyond what is immediately perceivable.