

SIOG 269: The black box of graduate school Winter 2022

Instructor: Sarah Aarons

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Course hours: Fridays, 1:30-3:20 pm

Location: Nierenberg 101/Zoom (see Canvas for link)

Course description: The process and curriculum of graduate school can be likened to an iceberg where much of the informal “hidden curriculum” such as developing research habits and direction, work-life equilibrium, and advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion are gleaned from experiences and/or mentorship from a variety of people spanning different career stages. This course focuses on the hidden curriculum in graduate school that can assist with the formal student learning to help individuals lead successful careers whether in academia, government, or industry. Each week will focus on a different topic including research habits (time management, rejection, self-direction, science identity), networks (mentorship, leadership), and community (research ethics, DEI in research and classes).

Class Instruction: Due to the ongoing pandemic, we will attempt in-person and remote instruction. To ensure full accessibility of in-class materials, in person instruction will be recorded when possible.

Course structure: This course has been modified from one taught by Margaret Zimmer at UC Santa Cruz and was designed through content discussions, planning, and development by graduate students in the department of Earth & Planetary Sciences. The course is designed to introduce graduate students to tools/materials/topics aimed at increasing success in their future career paths. This curriculum is not typically covered in core classes in graduate programs. The topics covered in this class can be confusing, overwhelming, and no one approach will work for everyone. Therefore, the course is structured to allow for peer-to-peer exchange and discussion facilitation to encourage open conversations.

Class format: Each week will involve completing readings and writing assignments prior to the class meeting. Please check the Canvas website regularly for updates and instructions.

Canvas & course texts: All class materials, including course readings and texts, assignment submission and course communication will occur through Canvas. Please check Canvas regularly for updates.

Course goals:

- Learn how to develop healthy research habitats, career direction, and scientific identity within the geosciences
- Learn how to develop & foster professional relationships and different networks with specific professional and personal goals
- Learn how to work with peers within your lab, department, university, and larger scientific community to support inclusive environments.

In assessment of your participation in this course, the learning outcomes expected for a student to pass this course are:

- To develop individualized skill sets that prioritize a healthy academic climate and better prepare graduate students for future careers.
- To strengthen your understanding of individual research directions and identity beyond graduate school
- To improve the climate of inclusions within the geosciences community through discussions on the role of the individual in building/supporting a better academic culture.

Evaluation: This course will be P/NP and completion of this course requires enrolled students to be fully engaged with the course materials and discussion.

Course/classroom guidelines: This course is designed to touch on topics that are not frequently discussed in formal training/classroom settings. We anticipate providing a space where individuals can share experiences and reflect on those while acknowledging and validating personal and career struggles/successes. To ensure a safe and comfortable environment, participants should agree to be supportive, open, and trusting of one another.

Course schedule: Check Canvas for more up to date information

Week	Topic
1: 1/7	Introduction/ "Rules of the Road"
2: 1/14	Research habits: dealing with rejection
3: 1/21	Research habits: effective time managements
4: 1/28	Research habits: self-directed research, zooming out to ask the big questions
5: 2/4	Research habits: Finding your scientific identity
6: 2/11	Building networks: the act of networking & bias
7: 2/18	Building networks: getting the most out of mentorship
8: 2/25	Community: Collaborating effectively, equally, and co-productively
9: 3/4	Community: Research ethics & core values
10: 3/11	Community: DEI in research & STEM classes