Field Research Safety
(Policy OR-0001)

I. Purpose of the Policy

Field research can present unique safety challenges when conducted in remote or potentially hazardous environments. This policy addresses the need to manage field research safety risk. The safety risk assessment process includes identifying hazards, evaluating exposure potential, and implementing appropriate mitigating measures. Principal Investigators, academic supervisors, field team leaders, and other responsible individuals must control safety risks associated with both the research and the local environment.

II. Definitions

Field: Area outside the geographic boundaries of the University, the engineered (urban) environment, and/or the United States.
Participants: Academic employees, staff, student, or volunteer involved in any activity in the field.
Research Activities: Tasks directly involved in fulfilling research goals, including ancillary activities such as transportation and habitation.
Safety Risk: The probability that a person will be harmed or experience an adverse health effect if exposed to a hazard.

III. Detailed Policy Statement

Principles
1. The health and safety of field research participants is of paramount concern and must be considered and addressed during activity planning.
2. The University is responsible for assessing and appropriately addressing potential safety risk associated with research activities.
3. The potential severity and likelihood of safety risk must be considered when determining whether or not an activity should proceed.
4. Implementation procedures for this policy are defined in the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Procedure for Field Research Safety.

Risk Assessment
Academic employees and Staff organizing any field research activity must make reasonable efforts to determine the foreseeable potential safety risks presented by participation in the activity and must, with the assistance of qualified individuals, take reasonable steps to appropriately mitigate those risks. If an activity assessment indicates potentially high participant safety risk, even after reasonable risk mitigation strategies have been considered, the activity must be revised to reduce risk or cancelled. It is essential that, having assessed the safety risks, those organizing the activity will exercise appropriate care in deciding whether to proceed.
Planing
The University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) Field Research program provides field safety planning tools and support. Use of a pre-trip field plan is required for research in remote or potentially hazardous locations. While a field safety plan can provide mitigating parameters and control requirements for a number of potentially hazardous conditions, it should be recognized that no set of guidelines can address every possible contingency. Focused training may be required for trip organizers, as well as participants, depending on the potential hazards noted in the plan.

Additional support and resources are available through the UC Center of Excellence for Field Safety.

Communication
Field research organizers should advise potential participants, prior to their commitment, of the reasonably foreseeable risks associated with participation in the research activities. The field safety plan, risk assessment, and/or procedure document(s) must be shared with potential trip participants. Trip organizers should conduct an in-person pre-trip meeting that includes a discussion of potential safety risks and appropriate controls.

Participation
Potential field research participants are responsible for evaluating the appropriateness of the planned field activity and associated safety risks with respect to their personal capabilities. UC employees are not required to participate in any campus activity that they believe poses a significant personal safety risk. If a student determines that a required academic activity poses a significant personal safety risk, the student should discuss the potential need for accommodation with the instructor or field research organizer. No student should be compelled to participate in an academic activity that involves personal safety risks that they are not willing to assume.

IV. Getting Help
The campus EH&S Field Research program provides training and assistance to campus units (including help with completing forms, carrying out procedures, or interpreting policy).

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<th>If you need help with ...</th>
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<tr>
<td>questions about this policy</td>
<td>The Executive Director of Environmental Health and Safety,</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ehs@ucsc.edu">ehs@ucsc.edu</a>, 831-459-5394, <a href="http://ehs.ucsc.edu/index.html">http://ehs.ucsc.edu/index.html</a></td>
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<td>using UC Santa Cruz field safety tools or questions regarding the field safety program</td>
<td>The Environmental Health and Safety Field Safety Program,</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:fieldsafety@ucsc.edu">fieldsafety@ucsc.edu</a>, 831-459-2553, <a href="https://ehs.ucsc.edu/programs/research-safety/field-research/">https://ehs.ucsc.edu/programs/research-safety/field-research/</a></td>
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V. Applicability and Authority
This Field Research Safety policy applies to all individuals participating in research activities sponsored by the University. The policy includes all academic and occupational field research activities held outside of the UCSC main campus.

The Vice Chancellor for Research is the campus authority for the Field Research Safety policy, with implementation authority delegated to the Executive Director of Environmental Health and Safety, including the authority to approve exceptions. Planned field research activities will be routinely reviewed.
in accordance with the EH&S Procedure for Field Research Safety. Ultimately, the Vice Chancellor for Research, or his/her delegate, has authority to deny any field research activity due to unacceptable safety risk. This policy was reviewed and approved by Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor, _____ on x/x/2017. Next review date is x/x/20xx.

VI. Related Policies/References for More Information

Implementation Procedures

   EH&S Procedure for Field Research Safety

Resources

   UC Santa Cruz Field Safety Program

VII. Revision History

Xx/xx/2017: New policy